

## UN says eat less meat to curb global warming

Level 3 • Advanced

### 1 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

|           |             |          |               |            |
|-----------|-------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| sacrifice | consumption | gluttony | contradictory | simplistic |
| graze     | livestock   | ruminant | feasibility   | flatulence |

- \_\_\_\_\_ is the process of eating or drinking something.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ is an animal such as a cow or sheep that brings food back from its stomach into its mouth to chew it a second time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is when a person or animal has too much gas in their stomach or intestines.
- When animals \_\_\_\_\_, they eat grass growing in a field.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the chance that something has of happening or being successful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the bad habit of eating more than you need.
- If two or more ideas are \_\_\_\_\_, they disagree with each other and cannot both or all be true.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the collective word for animals such as cows, sheep and pigs that are kept on farms.
- If you make a \_\_\_\_\_, you give up something important or valuable so that you or other people can do or have something else.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ idea treats something in a way that makes it seem simpler than it really is.

### 2 What do you know?

Decide whether these statements are *True (T)* or *False (F)*. Then check your answers in the text.

- Carbon dioxide is a more effective greenhouse gas than methane.
- Meat production produces 10% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.
- The average British person eats more meat than WHO guidelines recommend.
- Reducing car use by half would cut greenhouse gases by more than reducing meat consumption by half.
- If everyone became vegetarian, greenhouse gases would be reduced dramatically.
- Keeping livestock indoors would be bad for their health.

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- *Climate expert urges radical shift in diet*
- *Industry unfairly targeted – farmers*

**Juliette Jowit, environment editor**  
**September 7, 2008**

- 1 People should have one meat-free day a week if they want to make a personal and effective sacrifice that would help tackle climate change according to the world's leading authority on global warming. Dr Rajendra Pachauri, chair of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which last year earned a joint share of the Nobel Peace Prize, said that people should then go on to reduce their meat consumption even further. His comments are the most controversial advice yet provided by the panel on how individuals can help tackle global warming.
- 2 Pachauri, who was re-elected the panel's chairman for a second six-year term last week, said diet change was important because of the huge greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental problems – including habitat destruction – associated with rearing cattle and other animals. It was relatively easy to change eating habits compared to changing means of transport, he said.
- 3 The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that meat production accounts for nearly a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions. These are generated during the production of animal feeds, for example, while ruminants, particularly cows, emit methane, which is 23 times more effective as a global warming agent than carbon dioxide. The agency has also warned that meat consumption is set to double by the middle of the century.
- 4 "In terms of immediacy of action and the feasibility of bringing about reductions in a short period of time, it clearly is the most attractive opportunity," said Pachauri. "Give up meat for one day [a week] initially, and decrease it from there," said the Indian economist, who is a vegetarian. However, he also stressed other changes in lifestyle would help to combat climate change. "That's what I want to emphasize: we really have to bring about reductions in every sector of the economy."
- 5 Pachauri can expect some vociferous responses from the food industry to his advice, though last night he was given unexpected support by Masterchef presenter and restaurateur John Torode, who is about to publish a new book, *John Torode's Beef*. "I have a little bit and enjoy it," said Torode. "Too much for any person becomes gluttony. But there's a bigger issue here: where [the meat] comes from. If we all bought British and stopped buying imported food we'd save a huge amount of carbon emissions."
- 6 Tomorrow, Pachauri will speak at an event hosted by animal welfare group Compassion in World Farming, which has calculated that if the average UK household halved meat consumption that would cut emissions more than if car use was cut in half. The group has called for governments to lead campaigns to reduce meat consumption by 60 per cent by 2020. Campaigners have also pointed out the health benefits of eating less meat. The average person in the UK eats 50g of protein from meat a day, equivalent to a chicken breast and a lamb chop – a relatively low level for rich nations but 25-50 per cent more than World Health Organization guidelines.
- 7 Professor Robert Watson, the chief scientific adviser for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who will also speak at tomorrow's event in London, said government could help educate people about the benefits of eating less meat, but it should not 'regulate'. "Eating less meat would help, there's no question about that, but there are other things," Watson said.
- 8 However, Chris Lamb, head of marketing for pig industry group BPEX, said the meat industry had been unfairly targeted and was working hard to find out which activities had the biggest environmental impact and reduce those. Some ideas were contradictory, he said – for example, one solution to emissions from livestock was

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to keep them indoors, but this would damage animal welfare. "Climate change is a very young science and our view is there are a lot of simplistic solutions being proposed," he said.

- 9 Last year a major report into the environmental impact of meat eating by the Food Climate Research Network at Surrey University claimed livestock generated eight per cent of UK emissions – but eating some meat was good for the planet because some habitats benefited from grazing. It also said vegetarian diets that included lots of milk, butter and cheese would probably not noticeably reduce emissions because dairy

cows are a major source of methane, a potent greenhouse gas released through flatulence.

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### 3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer according to the text.

1. What is the main problem associated with meat consumption?
  - a. It is unhealthy.
  - b. It produces greenhouse gases.
  - c. It is expensive compared with vegetarianism.
2. Why wouldn't a vegetarian diet make much difference?
  - a. Because vegetarians eat lots of dairy products produced by cows.
  - b. Because it would cost a lot to grow more crops.
  - c. Because some habitats benefit from grazing.
3. What does the restaurateur John Torode believe?
  - a. That importing food is a more important issue than reducing consumption.
  - b. That global warming is caused by meat consumption.
  - c. That climate change is a very young science.
4. Professor Watson wants...
  - a. ... the government to introduce laws to reduce meat consumption.
  - b. ... the government to tell people that eating less meat would be good for them.
  - c. ... the government to find out which activities have the biggest environmental impact.

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#### 4 Find the word

Look in the text and find the following words and expressions. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

1. A verb meaning *to make an organized and determined attempt to deal with a problem*. (para 1)
2. A noun meaning *a group of people who make decisions or judgments*. (para 1)
3. A noun meaning *the type of place an animal normally lives*. (para 2)
4. A verb meaning *to look after an animal until it is fully grown*. (para 2)
5. A verb meaning *to do something to try to stop something bad from becoming worse*. (para 4)
6. An adjective meaning *loud and with force*. (para 5)
7. A two-word expression meaning *of the same value as something else*. (para 6)
8. An adjective meaning *powerful or effective*. (para 9)

#### 5 Verb + noun collocations

Match the verbs from the left-hand column with the nouns in the right-hand column.

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. change      | a. climate change |
| 2. generate    | b. consumption    |
| 3. bring about | c. a campaign     |
| 4. tackle      | d. a solution     |
| 5. host        | e. gases          |
| 6. halve       | f. a reduction    |
| 7. propose     | g. eating habits  |
| 8. lead        | h. an event       |

#### 6 Two-word expressions

Complete the expressions. Note that two words are used twice. Check your answers in the text.

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <b>g</b> _____ gases    | 5. <b>c</b> _____ dioxide   |
| 2. <b>c</b> _____ change   | 6. <b>h</b> _____ benefits  |
| 3. <b>g</b> _____ warming  | 7. <b>e</b> _____ impact    |
| 4. <b>e</b> _____ problems | 8. <b>c</b> _____ emissions |

#### 7 Discussion

Would you be willing to reduce your meat consumption to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions? What other ways could people help to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide, methane and other gases that contribute to global warming?

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### KEY

#### 1 Key words

1. consumption
2. ruminant
3. flatulence
4. graze
5. feasibility
6. gluttony
7. contradictory
8. livestock
9. sacrifice
10. simplistic

#### 2 What do you know?

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. F
6. T

#### 3 Comprehension check

1. b
2. a
3. a
4. b

#### 4 Find the word

1. tackle
2. panel
3. habitat
4. rear
5. combat
6. vociferous
7. equivalent to
8. potent

#### 5 Verb + noun collocations

1. g
2. e
3. f
4. a
5. h
6. b
7. d
8. c

#### 6 Two-word expressions

1. greenhouse
2. climate
3. global
4. environmental
5. carbon
6. health
7. environmental
8. carbon