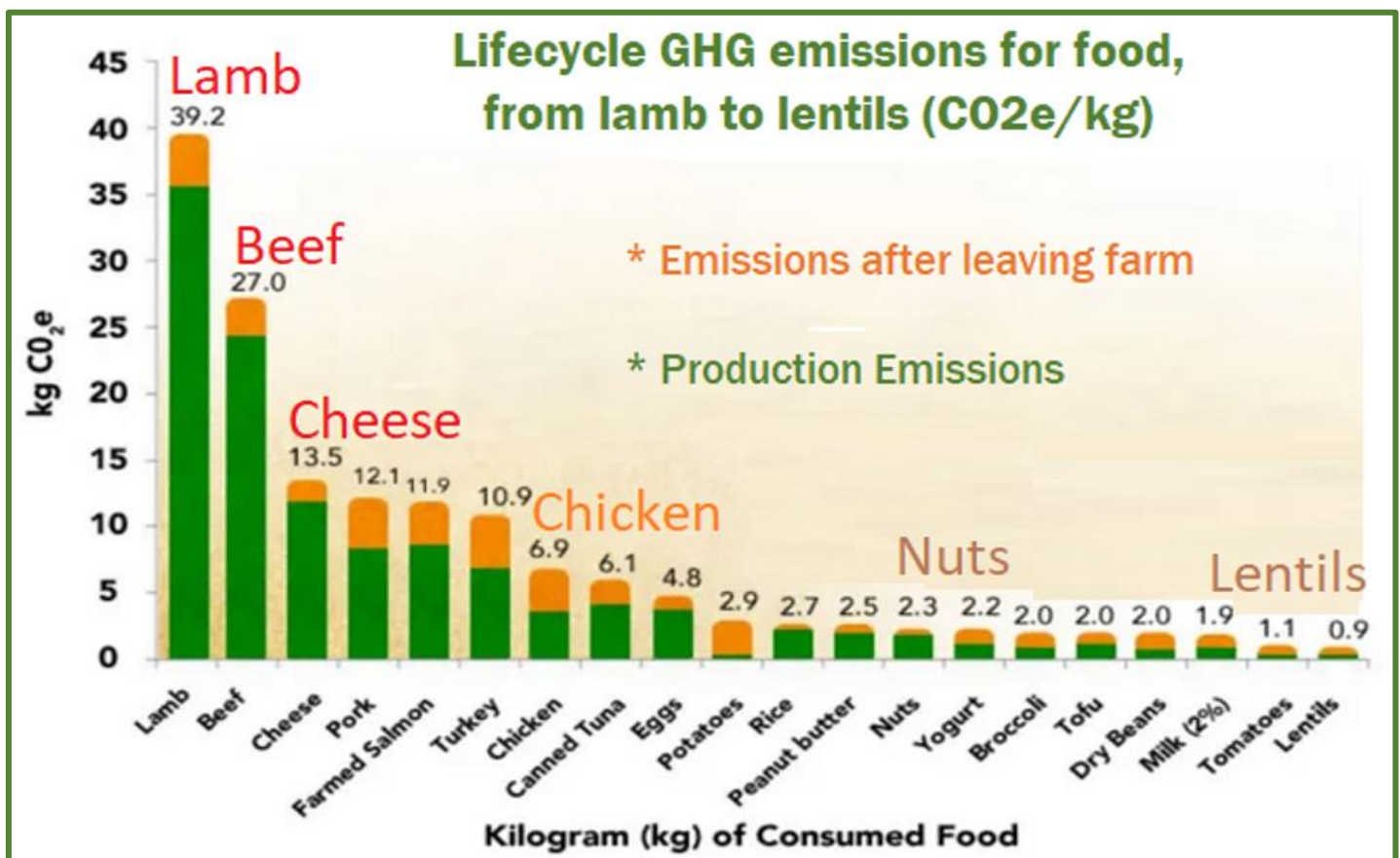


Eat Lower on the Food Chain

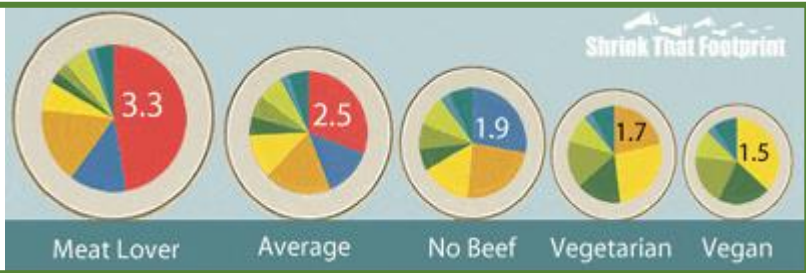
Reducing our dependence on animal products by eating more plant-based meals is an easy way to reduce our impact on the planet.

- 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, which requires antibiotics to aid digestion when fed to cattle;
- 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.
- Using local, seasonal ingredients when available supports the local economy and avoids long-distance transportation.
- When eating meat and eggs, choose grassfed and free range as well as local.

This chart compares food emissions in CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) per kilogram:



Comparing the carbon footprints of different diets:



For healthy vegan meals:

Balance protein (essential amino acids) by combining complementary, incomplete sources of protein from adjacent pairs of the following types of food (*the amount of protein in each category is listed in descending order*):

- **Grains:** oats, quinoa, * whole wheat, barley, cornmeal, brown rice, white rice.
- **Legumes:** soybeans, * lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, black Beans, navy beans, garbanzo beans (aka chickpeas), sweet peas.
- **Nuts & Seeds:** hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, almonds, pistachios, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, sesame seeds, chia seeds, cashews & walnuts. (Flax seeds, chia and walnuts are also rich in omega-3s.)
- **Other sources of good nutrition:**
- **Vegetables and fruits:** provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Plan to use as many seasonal and local items as possible, which cut the footprint of transportation.
 - *Soybeans (e.g. soymilk or tofu) are a complete protein. Quinoa is nearly complete, but easily balanced by a small amount of a legume.
- **Flavor and texture:** Include savory ingredients like sautéed mushrooms, toasted nuts and seeds, and spices like smoked paprika and cumin.
- **Supplements:** If no animal products are included in your diet, include vitamin B12 and possibly calcium supplements.

Many traditional cuisines balance 20-30% legumes with 70 to 80% grains:

- **Latin America:** beans with corn or wheat tortillas or rice, or quinoa.
- **Middle East:** chickpeas with bulgar wheat, or falafels and hummus with pita.
- **Asia:** soy products or mung beans with rice, wheat, millet, or barley.

For vegetarian meals:

- In place of meat, include eggs or small amounts of cheese to add flavor.
- Adapt some of your favorite meat-based recipes.

Pescatarian diet: can we eat fish sustainably?

- Oceans are being over fished, depleting supply for those who rely on it.
- [Marine Stewardship Council](#) recognizes sustainable fisheries with a [blue fish label](#).
- [Aquaculture Stewardship Council](#) (ASC) certification is for farmed seafood.
- Eating smaller wild-caught fish (e.g. sardines, anchovies, herring) is [healthier](#).