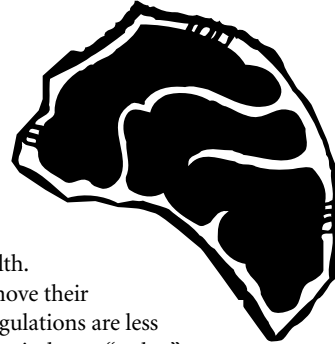


This Little Piggy Went to the Global Market

Meat production has increased by 500 percent since 1950. Today, most animals are raised on industrial “factory farms” that are displacing sustainable family farms. Thousands of animals are crowded in unsanitary conditions, spending their entire lives indoors without sunlight or pasture. To prevent disease from these inhumane practices, antibiotics are added to feed, contributing to the worldwide growth of antibiotic resistant bacteria. Vast amounts of manure pollute rivers and streams, causing toxic pollution of air and water and endangering human health.

Community opposition has prompted corporations to move their mega-farms to developing countries where environmental regulations are less strict. Because the time to ship from farm to store takes longer, industry “nukes” our meat with irradiation—prolonging “shelf-life”—despite evidence that irradiation is unsafe and dangerous. One day soon, you may find that your hamburger was raised half way around the world, irradiated, and flown thousands of miles before landing on your dinner plate.



DID YOU KNOW...?

- * Global meat consumption is expected to grow 2 percent each year until 2015, especially in developing countries where eating meat is seen as a sign of wealth and prosperity. Half of the world’s pork is now eaten in China, while Brazil is the second largest consumer of beef, after the United States.
- * Forty-three percent of the world’s beef is raised on factory feedlots, and more than half of the world’s pork and poultry is raised on factory farms.
- * Animals raised in feedlots accumulate Omega 6 fatty acids (the bad fats), which have been linked with cancer, diabetes, obesity, and immune disorders.
- * Belching, flatulent livestock emit 16 percent of the world’s annual production of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.
- * In 1995, 25 million gallons of hog waste spilled from an 8-acre lagoon into a river in the United States, killing 10 million fish.
- * An estimated 70 percent of all antibiotics in the U.S. are fed to pigs, poultry, and cattle merely to promote growth and compensate for the unsanitary and confined conditions on factory farms. By volume, livestock in the country consume eight times more antibiotics than humans do.
- * With its high meat content, the average U.S. diet requires twice as much water per person per day as an equally nutritious vegetarian diet. A meat-rich meal made with imported ingredients also emits nine times as much carbon as a vegetarian meal made with domestic ingredients that don’t have to be hauled long distances.
- * A diet high in grain-fed meat can require two to four times more land than a vegetarian diet.
- * A study in 2002 found that 37 percent of the broiler chickens found in major grocery stores are contaminated with antibiotic-resistant pathogens.
- * Since it was first reported in the United Kingdom in 1986, BSE (mad cow disease) has been detected in 33 countries, and health officials estimate that 139 people worldwide have succumbed to variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a related illness in humans.

SUCCESS STORIES

- ❖ Sustainable farming, a method of farming that is good for animals, people and the environment, has grown into a \$15.6 billion business worldwide.
- ❖ Local communities are organizing to oppose factory farms—and winning! Manitowoc County, in the U.S. state of Wisconsin, prevented a 5,000 head feedlot from locating in a residential area; residents of Saskatchewan, Canada, kept out six hog confinement buildings; and Klamath County in Oregon successfully prevented the construction of an 11,000-head hog factory.
- ❖ Sow gestation stalls/crates on factory farms, which are so narrow that pregnant pigs cannot turn around, are now banned in the United Kingdom and Sweden, and will be illegal in the European Union in 2013.
- ❖ More and more people—including some 150 million people in Europe alone—are either becoming vegetarians or reducing their consumption of meat.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF AND OTHERS:

Invite friends over for a locally grown, sustainable meal. All ingredients must be raised or grown within a certain radius, e.g., 30 miles of your home. (Even residents of New York City can do this!) Discussion at the meal will revolve around the food—what you learned about locally grown food, how easy or difficult it was to find everything, etc. To make it more fun, ask your friends to provide some of the local food.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- 🐷 **GRACE Factory Farm Project** (www.factoryfarm.org) has information on the environmental, economic, health, well-being and social aspects of factory farming, as well as sustainable meat.
- 🐷 **The Eat Well Guide** (www.eatwellguide.org) is a national online resource that lists sustainable farmers, restaurants, and stores in the United States.
- 🐷 **Public Citizen** (www.citizen.org/cmep/foodsafety) has information on the hazards of irradiated food and the use of irradiation as a tool for globalization.



SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- ✓ Get to know local farmers who raise sustainable meat in your area.
- ✓ Buy sustainable meat at your local health food store or farmer’s market. (When you add in environmental and health costs, “inexpensive” factory farmed meat is actually more expensive than sustainable meat.)
- ✓ If necessary, cut back on your meat consumption.
- ✓ Read *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser (Houghton Mifflin: 2001), to give yourself more background on the factory farm issue.