

Climate-Friendly Food Challenge

Curated by Linda Hendrickson, Portland, Oregon, 2021

Updated October 4, 2021

This is a five-session challenge with weekly Zoom meetings. Each week will have themes and activities, and participants will receive a list of readings and videos for discussion. The goal of the challenge is to motivate participants to take action on food choices as solutions to climate change. **The solutions that will be presented and discussed are: moving toward a plant-rich diet, minimizing food waste, and composting.**

Preparing for the Challenge (Homework before Zoom Meeting #1)

Take the Harvard Foodprint Calculator Survey. This is a 5-minute survey to determine the environmental impact of your diet. Make a screen print of the pages for your reference, and have your results handy for the Zoom meeting. You will take the survey again at the end of the Challenge to see how you have improved your diet's environmental impact.

<https://harvard-foodprint-calculator.github.io/>

Read: Your Diet Is Cooking the Planet

Article in *The Atlantic*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2021/04/rules-eating-fight-climate-change/618515/>

Weekly Zoom Meeting #1 (1 hour, 30 minutes)

1:30 - 1:35 (5 minutes) Gather, welcome people by name as they arrive.

1:35 - 1:40 (5 minutes) A moment of arriving as a group, taking a few breaths, with encouraging words by a facilitator.

1:40 - 1:50 (10 minutes) Introductions -- Please say your name & pronouns (if you wish), and also, to help us get to know each other, you can say what you had for lunch, or something you feel passionate about. When you finish, please choose the next person.

1:50 - 1:55 (5 minutes) A facilitator will explain how the challenge will work. List of readings and videos will be sent out a week ahead.. Weekly Zoom meetings to discuss content. Questions or comments?

1:55 - 2:20 (25 minutes) Share your food journey and what inspires you to take action related to food. When you finish, please choose the next person.

2:20 - 2:35 (15 minutes) Discuss results of the Harvard Foodprint Calculator Survey

2:35 - 2:55 (20 minutes) Discuss the article in The Atlantic, “Your Diet is Cooking the Planet”

2:55 - 3:00 (5 minutes) Questions/suggestions

3:00 Meeting ends.

Week 1 Themes and Activities

- Learn about food’s contribution to climate change.
- Consider different ways of eating: Planetarian, Flexitarian, Reducetarian, Vegetarian, Whole Food Plant-Based, Vegan
- Try new plant-based recipes
- Attend Zoom meeting #2 to discuss the week’s activities and prepare for next week

Readings and Videos for Week 1

“Planet Earth: As We Eat Our Way to Extinction”

4-minute video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2co3CX5VGvI&t=21s>

Project Drawdown Solution: Plant-Rich Diets

1-page summary

<https://www.drawdown.org/solutions/plant-rich-diets>

Reducetarian Foundation

Website about eating less meat and dairy and fewer eggs

<https://www.reducetarian.org/>

Go Meatless Monday -- It’s Good for You, and Good for the Planet

Web page with weekly features, recipes, and news

www.meatlessmonday.com

Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Vegetarian Diets

The world’s largest organization of nutrition professionals. “Plant-based diets are more environmentally sustainable than diets rich in animal products because they use fewer natural resources and are associated with much less environmental damage.”

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27886704/>

Ashley: Milk-Free Mornings Mom

1-1/2 minute video about using plant-based milk for breakfast

<https://www.betterfoodfoundation.org/#!/action>

10 Simple & Healthy Plant-Based Recipes in 20 Minutes or Less

Recipes by Jeff Novick, MS, RDN, LDN

<https://eatplant-based.com/10-simple-healthy-plant-based-recipes/>

Whole Food Plant-Based Recipes

Linda Hendrickson's favorite soups and a few other recipes, all gluten-free

<http://lindahendrickson.com/recipes.htm>

Food Sources of 5 Important Nutrients for Vegetarians

Recommendations for Calcium, Iron, Protein, Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D on the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

<https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/vegetarian-and-special-diets/food-sources-of-important-nutrients-for-vegetarians>

Meat Eater's Guide to Climate Change + Health

25-page PDF from the Environmental Working Group

<https://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/>

Further Resources**Plant-Based Portland Meetup**

Monthly potluck and discussion where every dish promotes our own health, and the health of the planet (currently meeting on Zoom).

<https://www.meetup.com/Plant-Based-Portland/>

How Bad are Bananas? The Carbon Footprint of Everything (2011)

by Mike Berners-Lee

<https://howbadarebananas.com/>

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/327720152>

Summary Report of the EAT-Lancet Commission.

32-page PDF: *Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems*

https://eatforum.org/content/uploads/2019/07/EAT-Lancet_Commission_Summary_Report.pdf

Ending the battle between vegans, vegetarians, and everyone else

18-minute TED-x talk by Brian Kateman, cofounder and president of the Reductarian Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing consumption of animal products.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJJtRWFL_gw

The Reducetarian Solution: How the Surprisingly Simple Act of Reducing the Amount of Meat in Your Diet Can Transform Your Health and the Planet

The Reducetarian Foundation website:

<https://www.reducetarian.org/book>

Multnomah County Library (e-book and downloadable audiobook only)

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/929761152>

The Reducetarian Cookbook: 125 Easy Healthy & Delicious Plant Based Recipes for Omnivores Vegans & Everyone In Between

Powell's Books (\$12.98 used paperback)

<https://www.powells.com/book/reducetarian-cookbook-125-easy-healthy-delicious-plant-based-recipes-for-omnivores-vegans-everyone-in-between-9781546082774>

We are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast 272 pages, 2019.

by Jonathan Safran Foer

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/1348985152>

Powell's Books (hardcover, \$17.50)

<https://www.powells.com/book/we-are-the-weather-saving-the-planet-begins-at-breakfast-9780374280000>

Weekly Zoom Meeting #2 (1 hour, 15 minutes)

1:30 - 1:35 (5 minutes) Gather, welcome people by name as they arrive.

1:35 - 1:40 (5 minutes) A moment of arriving as a group, taking a few breaths with encouraging words by a facilitator.

1:40 - 2:00 (20 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) What article or video had the most impact for you? Why? While people are talking, listen for negative comments also, and follow up when appropriate.

2:00 - 2:15 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Discuss the different dietary options: Planetarian, Flexitarian, Reducetarian, Vegetarian, Whole Food Plant-Based, Vegan, or your own words. What appeals to you about the one you chose?

2:15 - 2:30 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you try new plant-based recipes during the past week? Tell us about them!

2:30 - 2:40 (10 minutes) Preview of next week's activities. Share screen Google doc Week 2.

2:40 - 2:45 Questions/suggestions

2:45 Meeting ends.

Week 2 Themes and Activities

- Continue to learn about food's contribution to climate change
- Learn about plant-based meats
- Try new plant-based recipes
- Attend Zoom meeting #3 to discuss the week's activities and prepare for next week

Readings and Videos for Week 2

Plant-Based Eating: Using the Healthy Plate to Eat Well

20-page digital booklet from Kaiser Permanente. Large type and lots of photos! Tips for getting started eating plant-based, Healthy Plate examples, meal ideas, sample menus, tips for eating out, creating a personal action plan.

http://www.kphealthyme.com/documents/plant_based_diet_e.aspx

You want to reduce the carbon footprint of your food? Focus on what you eat, not whether your food is local

<https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local>

Cutting methane emissions is quickest way to slow global heating - UN report

Article in *The Guardian*: Fossil fuels, cattle, and rotting waste produce greenhouse gas responsible for 30% of global heating

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/may/06/cut-methane-emissions-rapidly-fight-climate-disasters-un-report-greenhouse-gas-global-heating>

Neutral

Portland-based startup currently offering carbon-neutral milk and milk products

<https://www.eatneutral.com/>

The Protein-Combining Myth

4-minute video: "The myth that plant proteins are incomplete, necessitating protein combining, was debunked by the scientific nutrition community decades ago."

<https://nutritionfacts.org/video/the-protein-combining-myth/>

Feeding Bill Gates a Fake Burger (to save the world)

Humorous 17-minute video, including visits to Impossible Foods and Beyond Meat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-k-V3ESHcfA>

Recipe: Vegan Chik'n Salad with Soy Curls and Tofu Mayonnaise

34-minute food demonstration, PlantPure Kitchen Live with Kim Campbell, streamed live on June 25, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWAvifR2tSc&t=1164s>

Butler's Soy Curls

Made by an independent, family owned business in Grande Ronde, Oregon

<https://www.butlerfoods.com/>

Climate-Friendly Food Guide

17-page PDF from the Humankind radio program, The Diet-Climate Connection, 2012.

<http://www.humanmedia.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/foodguide-1.pdf>

Further Resources**Plant-Based on a Budget: Delicious Vegan Recipes for Under \$30 a Week for Less than 30 Minutes a Meal**

Website and book by Toni Okamoto.

<https://plantbasedonabudget.com/>

Multnomah County Library

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/v2/record/S152C1331921>

Food is the Solution: What to Eat to Save the World

By Matthew Prescott, 2018

Multnomah County Library

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/748474152>

Powell's Books (\$21.00 Used Hardcover)

<https://www.powells.com/book/food-is-the-solution-what-to-eat-to-save-the-world-80-recipes-for-a-greener-planet-a-healthier-you-9781250144454>

Canada's Food Guide

Brenda Davis, RD says: "The Canadian government was very successful in keeping industry out of the food guidelines", and the guidelines are "an example for the world".

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

Proteinaholic: How Our Obsession with Meat is Killing Us and What We Can Do About It

by Garth Davis, MD

<https://drgarthdavis.com/>

Multnomah County Library: <https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/50055152>

Powell's: (Used Hardcover, \$13.95)

<https://www.powells.com/book/proteinaholic-how-our-obsession-with-meat-is-killing-us-what-we-can-do-about-it-9780062279309>

Fiber Fueled: The Plant-based Gut Health Program for Losing Weight, Restoring your Health, and Optimizing your Microbiome

by Will Bulsiewicz, MD

<https://theplantfedgut.com/>

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/1510493152>

Meal Prep Guide

Web page, The Nutrition Source, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Includes recipes for vegetarians and omnivores

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/meal-prep/>

Weekly Zoom Meeting #3 (1 hour, 15 minutes)

1:30 - 1:35 (5 minutes) Gather, welcome people by name as they arrive.

1:35 - 1:40 (5 minutes) A moment of arriving as a group, taking a few breaths with encouraging words by a facilitator. Then go around with each person saying their name, and answering the question "What's one thing you're aiming to transform in your current relationship with food?" (Each person will call on the next person).

1:40 - 2:00 (20 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) What article or video had the most impact for you? Why? Did you learn anything new or surprising? Did you change your opinion about anything?

2:00 - 2:15 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you create a personal action plan based on the Kaiser Plant-Based Healthy Plate? What goals did you set?

2:15 - 2:30 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you try new plant-based recipes during the past week? Tell us about them!

2:30 - 2:40 (10 minutes) Preview of next week's activities. Share screen Google doc Week 3.

2:40 - 2:45 Questions/suggestions

2:45 Meeting ends.

Week 3 Themes and Activities

- Continue following your Kaiser Permanente Plant-Based Healthy Plate personal action plan
- Learn about the contribution of food waste to climate change
- Learn ways to minimize food waste
- Try new plant-based recipes
- Attend the Zoom meeting #4 to discuss the week's activities and prepare for next week

Readings and Videos

Project Drawdown Solution: Reduced Food Waste

1-page summary

<https://www.drawdown.org/solutions/reduced-food-waste>

Food Waste and the Death of Nature

PDF showing a graphic “map” on the website The Wicked 7, with many links on the second page

<https://www.wicked7.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/W7foodwaste.pdf>

The Problem of Food Waste

A page on the website FoodPrint

<https://foodprint.org/issues/the-problem-of-food-waste/>

Wasting food just feeds climate change, new UN environment report warns

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1086402>

Tackling Food Waste at Home

Web page, The Nutrition Source, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/sustainability/food-waste/food-waste-home/>

Save money by keeping a Food Waste Diary

<https://www.squawkfox.com/food-waste-diary/>

Freestyle Cooking: The Recipe for Eliminating Food Waste

<https://zerowastechef.com/2018/06/07/freestyle-cooking-recipe-eliminating-food-waste/>

How to Reduce Food Waste in Your Home, According to One of the World's Top Experts

1-minute video and article on the Real Simple website.

<https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/shopping-storing/food-waste-in-america>

Meat Footprint Calculator

Page on the Omnicalculator website to calculate your actual meat footprint and what happens if you eat less meat. Includes text, graphs, and charts about greenhouse gas emissions, land and water use, planetary and flexitarian diets, health benefits of reducing meat intake.

<https://www.omnicalculator.com/ecology/meat-footprint#health-benefits-of-reducing-meat-intake>

The Gracious Vegan website, featuring Portland chef Linda Tyler

Easy-to-follow recipes and frequently-asked questions about plant-based cooking

<https://www.graciousvegan.com/>

Recipes on Dr. John McDougall's website

Dr. McDougall is a Portland plant-based physician and climate activist

<https://www.drmcDougall.com/health/education/recipes/mcdougall-recipes/>

Further Resources

Food Scraps Policy

A page on Metro's website

<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/food-scraps-policy>

Wasted Food Measurement Study

Study of Oregon households for Oregon DEQ conducted by PSU

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/mm/food/pages/wasted-food-study.aspx>

Waste-Free Kitchen Handbook: A Guide to Eating Well and Saving Money By Wasting Less Food

by Dana Gunders, 2015

<https://www.amazon.com/Waste-Free-Kitchen-Handbook-Eating-Wasting/dp/1452133549>

The Zero-Waste Chef: Plant-Forward Recipes and Tips for a Sustainable Kitchen and Planet

by Anne Marie Bonneau, 2021

<https://zerowastechef.com/zero-waste-chef-cookbook/>

Powell's Books: (paperback, \$25.00):

<https://www.powells.com/book/zero-waste-chef-plant-forward-recipes-tips-for-a-sustainable-kitchen-planet-9780593188774>

Cooking with Scraps

by Lindsay-Jean Hard, 2018

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/1263432152>

Powell's Books (used hardcover, \$8.98):

<https://www.powells.com/book/cooking-with-scraps-turn-your-peels-cores-rinds-stems-into-delicious-meals-9780761193036>

Weekly Zoom Meeting #4 (1 hour, 15 minutes)

1:30 - 1:35 (5 minutes) Gather, welcome people by name as they arrive.

1:35 - 1:40 (5 minutes) A moment of arriving as a group, taking a few breaths with encouraging words by Pamela. Then go around with each person saying their name, and answering the question “What’s one action you are taking (or plan to take) to reduce food waste?” (Each person will call on the next person).

1:40 - 2:00 (20 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) What article or video had the most impact for you? Why? Did you learn anything new or surprising? Did you change your opinion about anything?

2:00 - 2:15 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you use the Meat Footprint Calculator? Any comments on the Kaiser Plant-Based Healthy Plate?

2:15 - 2:30 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you try new plant-based recipes during the past week? Tell us about them!

2:30 - 2:40 Preview of next week’s activities focusing on composting, going forth, and taking the Harvard Foodprint survey again. Share screen Google doc Week 4.

2: 40 - 2:45 Questions/suggestions

2:45 Meeting ends.

Week 4 Themes and Activities

- Learn more about the contribution of food waste to climate change
- Learn about composting
- Try new plant-based recipes
- Take the Harvard Foodprint Survey again to compare your numbers.
- Assess the changes you’ve made.
- Commit to continuing with the changes you’ve made, or make an even stronger commitment.
- Discuss how you will share what you have learned with others in your circle of influence..
- Attend the final Zoom meeting on to discuss the week’s activities and assess the program as a whole.

Readings and Videos

Project Drawdown Solution: Composting

1-page summary

<https://www.drawdown.org/solutions/composting>

Composting

Page on Metro website full of information about home composting

<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-living/yard-and-garden/composting>

Residential compost tips

Curbside composting in Portland's green bins, plus links to commercial composting facilities

<https://www.portland.gov/bps/garbage-recycling/residential-compost-tips>

Love & Plants, website of Newberg plant-based nutritionist Emily Forbes

Services include nutrition coaching, meal planning, and cooking classes

<https://www.loveandplants.com/>

Plant-Based Climate Cookbook

12-page PDF from the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

<https://pcrm.widen.net/s/tjnk6qg27v/21154-com-climate-cookbook>

A Plant-Based Diet for Beginners: What to Eat, Benefits, & How to Succeed

Food Revolution Network blog post, October 16, 2019, 15 minute read

<https://foodrevolution.org/blog/plant-based-diet-for-beginners/>

I Value Food

Food waste quiz, tips, and a month-long challenge

<https://ivaluefood.com/>

The Hidden Cost of Hamburgers

8-minute animated video (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut3URdEzIKQ&t=310s>

The Future of Meat

4-minute video on FT Transact YouTube Channel (Financial Times)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBdLy-iIKw>

Will Grant on Four Levels of Action

4-minute video

<https://vimeo.com/287129175>

How to Transform Apocalypse Fatigue into Action on Global Warming

15-minute TED talk by Norwegian psychologist and economist Per Espen Stokes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5h6ynog8uM>

Harvard Foodprint Calculator

5-minute survey to determine the environmental impact of your diet. Take the survey again, and compare your results now to those at the beginning of the challenge.

<https://harvard-foodprint-calculator.github.io/>

Further Resources

Drawdown Toronto Food Waste Challenge

Canadian website with Information and resources about minimizing food waste

<https://drawdowntoronto.ca/food-waste-challenge/>

Eat for the Planet: Saving the World One Bite at a Time 160 pages, 2018.

by Nil Zacharias and Gene Stone

Eat for the Planet website:

<https://eftp.co/book>

Powell's Books (hardcover, \$19.99)

<https://www.powells.com/book/eat-for-the-planet-saving-the-world-one-bite-at-a-time-9781419729102>

Eat for the Planet Cookbook

by Nil Zacharias and Gene Stone

191 pages, 2019.

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/1331232152>

Powell's Books (hardcover, \$12.95)

<https://www.powells.com/book/eat-for-the-planet-cookbook-75-recipes-from-leaders-of-the-plant-based-movement-that-will-help-save-the-world-9781419734410>

Drawdown Ecochallenge: Food, Agriculture, and Land Use

"...a fun and social way to take measurable action on the top solutions to global warming."

You can choose suggested actions or create your own measurable custom actions, and can post comments, questions, and photos.

<https://drawdown.ecochallenge.org/challenges/food-agriculture-and-land-use>

Comfortably Unaware: What We Choose to Eat is Killing Us and Our Planet

by Dr. Richard Oppenlander, 2012

Multnomah County Library:

<https://multcolib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/400181152>

Powell's Books (Used Paperback, \$7.50)

<https://www.powells.com/book/comfortably-unaware-global-depletion-food-responsibility-what-you-choose-to-eat-is-killing-our-planet-9780825306860>

Factory Farming Awareness Coalition

FFAC educates and empowers individuals and communities to support just and sustainable food systems.

<https://www.ffacoalition.org/>

NW VEG

Local non-profit organization that supports people in their transition toward making healthier, more sustainable & compassionate food choices.

<https://nwveg.org/>

Weekly Zoom Meeting #5 (1 hour, 30 minutes)

1:30 - 1:35 (5 minutes) Gather, welcome people by name as they arrive.

1:35 - 1:40 (5 minutes) A moment of arriving as a group, taking a few breaths with encouraging words by a facilitator. Then go around with each person saying their name, and answering the question "What's one action you are taking (or plan to take) relating to reducing food waste or composting?" (Each person will call on the next person).

1:40 - 2:00 (20 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) What article or video from this week had the most impact for you? Why?

2:00 - 2:15 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Did you try any new plant-based recipes during the past week? Tell us about them!

2:15 - 2:30 (15 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) Discuss the Harvard Foodprint Calculator results. Screen Share Excel file with before and after data. Did you make changes in your diet during the Challenge? If so, what motivated you?

2:30 - 2:50 (20 minutes) (Each person will call on the next person) How committed do you feel to the changes you've made? Do you want to make additional commitments? How will you share what you've learned with others in your circle of influence?

2:50 - 3:00 (10 minutes) Final thoughts/ questions/suggestions. Express gratitude to participants.

3:00 Meeting ends.

