

Cows and Climate Change

Your questions answered

“Cows cause climate change, yes?”

No. Cows are an important component of a stable climate.

Grassland covers much of the Earth’s surface, and through the process of photosynthesis plays a crucial role in removing carbon from the air and storing it in the soil (carbon sequestration).

Grassland only exists because it is grazed, by ruminants. Throughout history this grazing has been carried out by wild animals; buffalo, deer, camels. Today this role is played in much of the World by domesticated cattle.

“What about methane?”

Cows burp methane. This methane is rapidly broken down as a natural part of the carbon cycle. The problem we have today is the methane being released into the environment as a result of our use of fossil fuels, which is entering the environment far quicker than it can be broken down. Sources of this methane cover all aspects of our exploitation of fossil fuels, from fracking to plastic bags (which release methane as they break down).

“We can manage without cows though?”

The alternatives to beef and milk are based on products such as soya and palm oil, grown on land the other side of the planet that has had its rainforest destroyed to grow them. Cows also provide us with a huge range of products used in everyday life which would otherwise have to be made from oil. It’s not ‘vegan leather’, it’s plastic.

“Why are we being told that cows are bad for the planet then?”

Two sectors are pushing the anti-cow agenda for their own interests:

- Animal rights extremists, who have jumped on the climate change issue to scare people into giving up all contact with animals (including pets).
- Global corporations, who see vast amounts of money to be made from producing ‘food’ in factories from artificial ingredients. These companies are funding anti-cow campaigns.

“Where can I find out more about this issue?”

Visit www.thefarmingforum.co.uk and read the many threads on cows and climate change.

Remember kids....

It's not 'vegan wool', it's plastic.

It's not 'vegan leather', it's plastic.

It's not 'vegan fur', it's plastic.

It's all plastic, and every time you wash it, or damage it, or try to dispose of it, that plastic ends up in the water, in the earth, in the air. The damage has been done when the thing is made, it's all oil and oil products, the pollution has already occurred before these synthetic products get to you.

A lot of vegan ideology is built up around a very superficial set of ethics that are supposedly about protecting animals, wildlife and the environment, but they fall apart when you look even a little bit below the surface. Every time you eschew an animal-based product in favour of something synthetic for the sake of "saving an animals life", you're creating pollution and waste that wont go away for 1000's of years, damaging the earth and making life so much worse for countless animals and people.

Think about this stuff more than not at all, please.

What's on your BBQ this weekend?

Vegetarian sausages?

Ingredients: Rehydrated textured soya protein, water, soya protein concentrate, palm oil, seasoning (sulphites, dextrose, salt, flavourings, onion powder, yeast extract, colour, red iron oxide) , rapeseed oil, rusk (fortified wheat flour, wheat flour, calcium carbonate, iron, niacin, thiamin), salt, raising agent, ammonium bicarbonate, stabilizer: methyl cellulose, tomato puree, salt.

Inputs: An incalculable amount of diesel, electricity, water, raw materials, pesticides and packaging.

Eat a vegetarian sausage and you destroy a rainforest, lower a water table, wreck a soil structure, pollute a river, build a power station, clog a motorway, and fill a landfill site.

Lamb chops?

Ingredients: It doesn't have any ingredients, it's a lamb chop.

Inputs: rain, sunshine.

Eat a lamb chop and you maintain a grassland habitat, support biodiversity, remove CO2 from the atmosphere, and preserve soil structure.

Save the planet: Eat red meat