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.

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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

How to eat during a pandemic:
A globalized supply chain is a sure-fire way to rapidly spread disease, relying as it does on the interconnectivity of transport systems and those who make them function.
If you wish to slow the spread of disease then eat local, most especially fresh foods which require transportation at speeds quicker than we can hope to monitor disease.
Whatever happens, we have to eat. In times of crisis, the most secure jobs are those that feed us.
The best way to keep the economy functioning is to eat local. Not just locally grown but locally processed, packaged and distributed, as that is where most of the jobs are.
Jobs that are more labour intensive if delivered on a local, small scale.
Because right now it is labour intensive that is needed.
To pay taxes, to pay for the NHS.
And why isn't Government telling you this ?
Because Government is controlled by Global corporations, who are more powerful than Government.
And why are they so powerful ?
Because you give them all of your money.
You need to stop doing this, now.
If there is to be a future, it will be local.

Trees, trees, trees.
Can we all calm down a bit please.
The most stable, long term carbon store we have is permanent pasture.
Better than soya, better than lentils, better than rice, better than trees.
Permanent pasture only exists because it is grazed, by ruminants.
Save the planet: Eat red meat.

Soya, rainforests and UK livestock: setting the record straight.

We do not import whole soya beans into the UK to feed to our livestock. Rather, we import soya meal, a by-product of producing soya oil for human consumption which would otherwise be thrown away.

Livestock have always been used to transform food unfit for human consumption into nutrient-rich meat and milk.
We have been doing so since the first farmer threw a maggoty apple to the first domesticated pig.

Today we feed a huge range of by-products to our livestock; oil seeds, brewers grains, wheat unfit for baking bread.
All of this is an environmentally sound use of 'waste' products.

If you are concerned about rainforest clearance, then there are important steps you can take.
- Check food packet ingredients for soya.
- Purchase rapeseed oil labelled as being grown by UK farmers.
- Use butter and lard, two of the huge range of products we get from those most amazing providers of sustainable food: The cow and the pig.

Save the planet: Shop local, eat British, enjoy a balanced diet.

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Shoot all of the cows and the grassland goes one of two ways; scrub/ woodland, or crops. Which would result it an increase in UK GHG emissions as the below explains.

In the work of Guo and Gifford (2002) a meta-analysis was undertaken of data from 74 international land use change and soil carbon storage studies. It measured the effects of land use change in 537 instances and was used to determine the importance of land use and land use change on soil carbon stocks. The analysis showed that there was a decline in soil carbon stocks after land use conversion from grassland to plantation forest (−10 percent), native forest to plantation forest (−13 percent), native forest to cropland (−42 percent), and grassland to cropland (−59 percent). There were significant increases in soil carbon stocks after land use changes from native forest to grassland (+8 percent), cropland to grassland (+19 percent), cropland to plantation (+18 percent), and cropland to secondary forest (+53 percent). The conversion of native forest or grassland to broadleaf deciduous tree plantation had no effect on soil carbon stocks, but conversion to pine or conifer forest reduced soil carbon by between 12 and 15 percent. This analysis of land use change and soil carbon data also suggested that, if a given land use change is responsible for soil carbon losses, then the reverse change could potentially increase soil carbon stocks. But it is important to recognise that it can take decades if not centuries to recover to the original level of soil carbon stocks after disturbance due to land use change (Guo and Gifford, 2002).