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## Eating Green



We know that it's important to save energy. In fact it's been almost impossible to ignore the headlines telling us to do our bit for the environment, reduce our carbon footprint, adopt a greener lifestyle, and so on. Why not join the green movement by eating a more green diet and reducing your carbon 'food'print? Not only will this benefit the environment, it will benefit your health too!

### Know your carbon footprint:

Access the first carbon calculator specific to South Africa at [www.trees.co.za](http://www.trees.co.za). The carbon calculator tells you how many trees you need to plant to help neutralise your carbon footprint. But, there is a lot you can do beyond planting trees, and these are things you can do right away.

### How you can eat more of a 'green' diet

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Ok, admittedly, you may not start an organic veggie patch outside your back door but there's a lot more you can do to reduce your carbon 'food'print:

1. Use more foods that need less energy to cook:
  - Use more raw products such as adding a super salad to most meals.
  - Eat more (local and organic) fresh fruit. TIP: Make fresh fruit smoothies for a quick breakfast on the run!
  - Save energy by not overcooking foods. When cooking veggies, lightly steam them till tender but still crisp or microwave them briefly.
  - Use as little water as possible, steam where possible as this cooks food quicker.
  - Cook several things at once when using your oven or steamer. When using your oven make the most of it by roasting your vegetable medley along with your chicken breasts. You get the idea, try not use the oven for long periods of time for just 2 chicken breasts or a single piece of fish.
2. Bulk up on recipes so you maximise cooking time and portion out for freezing for later use.
3. Only boil as much water as you need in your kettle.
4. Eat food that is produced locally (less food miles) and support organic produce.
5. Eat seasonal produce (reduces cold storage). Don't get frustrated like I sometimes do when I can't find mangos in the middle of July!
6. The more food is processed (washed, cut, peeled, tinned, dried, wrapped etc...) the less 'green' it is. Avoid heavily packaged products if possible...use your own canvas bags when shopping instead of the usual plastic bags.
7. Recycle food containers even if you just fold them up tightly so they take up less volume in the garbage.
8. Filter your water rather than buying bottled water.
9. Use environmentally friendly cleaning products in your kitchen.
10. Buy energy efficient kitchen appliances.
11. If you have an electrical oven or stove top, turn it off a few minutes before your meal is due to finish cooking. The residual heat will likely suffice. If you don't open the oven door, the oven will carry on cooking at the same temperature.
12. Where you can, grow your own stuff:  
Start a garden vegetable patch ... live in an apartment? No problem...grow your own herbs such as a fragrant basil bush, a tub of mint, a little chilli tree. It's also so easy to sprout your own sprouts. Fresh things, eaten soon after being picked, are much richer in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients than produce that has been cold-stored, transported, then stored again in your fridge.

**Which causes more global warming, your car or your beef burger? Believe it or not it's the burger.**

One of the most effective steps you can make to reducing your carbon 'food'print, is to reduce the amount of animal products you eat.

Large-scale, industrial meat production has massive environmental impacts such as extensive deforestation, air and water pollution, land degradation, greenhouse gas production, climate change, the overuse of resources including oil and water, and loss of bio-diversity.



Arrgh! Am I suggesting you become a vegan? No, not at all! Most of us, especially as South Africans, tend to eat too much red meat and animal products overall. Eating less animal products may help you to not only support the green revolution but also keep you healthy as meat contains saturated fats that are not heart or waistline friendly!

**Eating less meat made easy...**

- Use your hand as a guide for proper meat portions...1 portion should be equivalent to the palm of your hand (about 150g)
- Eat more vegetable based meals such as stir fries and salads. Have at least 1 or 2 meat free days per week.
- Eat more fish! Visit <http://www.wvfsassi.co.za> to check out sustainable seafood choices.
- Even a braai can be more environmentally friendly if you go easy on the amount of meat by filling up on the good stuff...add on grilled corn on the cob, roast some butternut or sweet potato.

**Useful resources**

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Watch An Inconvenient Truth - the 2006 documentary film, directed by Davis Guggenheim, about former United States Vice President Al Gore's campaign to educate citizens about global warming and inspire them to take action. [www.climatecrisis.net](http://www.climatecrisis.net)

-[www.wvfsassi.co.za](http://www.wvfsassi.co.za)

-[www.trees.co.za](http://www.trees.co.za)

-[www.harmoniousliving.co.za](http://www.harmoniousliving.co.za)

**I will be presenting a presentation entitled "Manage your Energy, Not your Time' at 12h00 on Saturday 10th October at the Look and Feel Good Expo. Will be great to see you there!**  
[www.lookandfeelgoodexpo.co.za](http://www.lookandfeelgoodexpo.co.za)

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This document is for informational purposes only. If you require personalised advice, contact Celynn for a registered dietician in your area. I would love you to share this information with others! Thanks in advance for referencing the source.

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