



MAKE IT  
PERSONAL



Top Actions I Can Take for a Healthy Planet:

# ADOPT A PLANT-RICH DIET

It may not sound like much, but changing your diet even slightly can have a big impact on your health and the health of the planet. We know just how powerful our individual actions can be when taken to scale.

One way any of us can help the environment while also improving our own health is to eat less meat! An increasing number of studies show that just reducing the amount of meat in our diets and, instead, eating more fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, and seeds, can have a big impact.

Adopting a plant-rich diet doesn't have to mean giving up all meat. Reducing the amount of meat you eat and gradually introducing more plant-based items into a diet is a great way to start. Even reducing your weekly meat consumption by the equivalent of 1 burger or 2 pieces of chicken is enough to make an impact over your lifetime.

The popularity of going more “plant-based” is on the rise. According to a Johns Hopkins study, **2/3 of Americans** are already reducing the amount of meat they consume.<sup>1</sup>

As plant-based diets become mainstream, major meat producers, including JBS, Tyson, and Cargill, are making or investing in plant-based proteins that will replace meat in our diets.<sup>2</sup> In July 2019, Impossible Foods reported that they were actually running out of their signature meatless patties. Over 5,000 restaurants served their meatless products, and by year's end, with the help of fast food chains adopting their meatless options into their menus, that figure would likely reach 17,000.<sup>3</sup>



For over 40 years and in 60+ countries, Rare has led over 450 behavior change campaigns to inspire and empower millions of people to adopt new behaviors and better protect the natural resources that sustain us. As part of our “Make It Personal” campaign, we identified 7 key behaviors that offer the most potential for climate impact if adopted by individual Americans. The goal of Rare's Make it Personal campaign is to encourage 10% of Americans to adopt at least 1 of these 7 actions. **If we all do our part, we can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions responsible for climate change.**

# KEY BENEFITS



## Health Benefits

From a health standpoint, the evidence for adopting a plant-rich diet is significant. Health is perhaps the biggest reason people are shifting to a more plant-based diet. By simply reducing your meat consumption, **you can lower your risk of numerous chronic illnesses**, including heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, and in some cases, reverse the effects these illnesses have on the body.<sup>4</sup>



## Cost Effective

Less meat = More savings. When we think of eating on a budget, we tend to lean towards unhealthy, processed food. But it turns out **you can save nearly \$750 a year by eating more fruits, vegetables, and grains.**<sup>5</sup> Cambridge University Press cited that cost was a main motivation for reducing meat consumption.<sup>6</sup>



## Positive Environmental Impact

Americans consume almost 4 times the beef per capita as the global average.<sup>7</sup> Beef itself is one of the most greenhouse gas intensive proteins in the world. For context, beef has 20 times the impact on land use and greenhouse gas emissions to that of beans.<sup>8</sup> Reducing animal food intake and mostly eating plant-based foods will greatly help **reduce our country's greenhouse gas emissions.**<sup>9</sup>

# TIPS & IDEAS

**Try 1 meatless recipe a week.** There are so many great resources that offer plant-rich recipes. Some of our favorite vegetable-forward cookbook authors and blogs are:

- [Mark Bittman](#), NYT minimalist chef who has pioneered “flexitarian” cooking.
- Deb Perelman, a self-described “obsessive home cook” of [Smitten Kitchen](#), who uses meat infrequently, but you’d never notice.
- The Theus Family, who has been vegetarian for 30 years and shares their favorite meatless recipes on [Veggie Soul Food](#).

**Make it a friendly competition.** Practice your cooking skills and try new recipes by hosting a cooking competition among friends. Or, compete to see who can commit to the most meatless meals: having a partner will help hold you accountable and increase the likelihood of success.

**Go local.** Buy from small regional agriculture where you can find sustainably-grown produce and ethically-raised meat. You can check your local food co-ops, health food stores, and farmers’ markets. Look for availability in your area at [Local Harvest](#).

**Try new meat substitutes.** With so many new brands available on store shelves, substitute one of the many plant-based meat options for meat in one of your favorite recipes, such as lasagna, enchiladas, or chili.

## Make It Personal CHALLENGE

Throw a dinner party with your friends and don’t include meat in the menu. Don’t mention the meatless menu to your guests in advance! At the end of the meal, alert guests that no meat was served and see if anyone noticed!

**Share the results of your challenges with us on social media:**



Visit [rare.org/MakeItPersonal](https://rare.org/MakeItPersonal) for more information.

1. <https://hub.jhu.edu/2018/09/12/consumers-cut-back-on-meat-consumption/>  
2. <https://www.livekindly.co/big-meat-producers-vegan-food/>  
3. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20181108005123/en/Impossible-Foods%E2%80%99-Flagship-Product-5000-Restaurants>  
4. <https://www.mdanderson.org/publications/focused-on-health/vegetarian-diet-and-cancer-risk.h31Z1591413.html>  
5. [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19320248.2015.1045675?journalCode=when200#ViAG\\_H6rSM8](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19320248.2015.1045675?journalCode=when200#ViAG_H6rSM8)

6. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/public-health-nutrition/article/reducing-meat-consumption-in-the-usa-a-nationally-representative-survey-of-attitudes-and-behaviours>  
7. <https://data.oecd.org/agroutput/meat-consumption.htm>  
8. <https://www.wri.org/blog/2019/04/6-pressing-questions-about-beef-and-climate-change-answered>  
9. <https://www.ipcc.ch/srcl/>