

If claims related to species extinction, climate change or veganism are challenged, it's important to respond with factual evidence in a calm, respectful demeanor.

This document is intended to aid in the conversations and interactions you will conduct with those interested in and/or questioning our campaign claims.

Below are several questions we're anticipating, and our responses. As always, if you have any issues or questions throughout the course of the campaign, you can reach out to your fellow activists or directly message our support team [via the campaign Facebook page](#).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

### 1. *Don't we need to eat animals to be healthy?*

There is no scientific evidence to support the claim that human beings need to eat other animals in order to be healthy. Humans can meet all of their nutritional needs with a vegan diet. According to the American Dietetic Association, "appropriately planned vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegan diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes."

There are some who may claim that certain human beings require animal products depending on blood type or other physical and physiological differences, but there is no scientific evidence to support such claims. To quote nutritional epidemiologist Micaela Karlsen, "Human beings are one species; we are all the same animal, with the same digestive physiology. And, as is true of all species, we do not require personalized nutritional programs unless we are dealing with a specific disease or some other very unusual condition... Where nutrition is concerned, it's helpful to ask yourself, "Where in nature can I find an example of this?" And in this example of a very wide variation of nutrient intake, the answer is "nowhere."

### 2. *Isn't "local" meat, "grass-fed beef" or medium to small scale animal agriculture more sustainable than "factory farmed" meat and dairy?*

Actually, no. Grass-fed beef is even less sustainable than factory farming, as grass-fed cows require more land and resources. See this recent study from the Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford.

It's a widely accepted fact that farmed animals require more food than they produce. The level of resource consumption, waste production, and greenhouse gas impact per unit of animal products created is going to be in the same catastrophic range regardless of whether an animal is raised in a factory farm or in a pasture.

Simply put, growing vegetables requires far less resources than growing mammals. To suggest that any meat-based diet is lower impact than the choice to eat predominantly locally, organically grown plant-foods is simply incorrect. It is not just factory farmed animals, but all farmed animals, that contribute to deforestation, soil degradation and water scarcity.

### 3. *Don't we need animal manure to grow food?*

Vegetables, grains, fruits, and mushrooms can be grown without any animal inputs such as manure, bone, blood, or scales. Nitrogen and other vital nutrients can be obtained by utilizing "veganic" growing techniques that employ (continued on next page) processes such as composting, green manure, and mulching. Veganic agriculture is the lowest impact, most environmentally sustainable method of farming. You can click here to learn more about veganic agriculture.

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#### **4. *Don't we need animals to build topsoil?***

There are some who claim we need livestock to build healthy topsoil. Most folks making these claims site Allan Savory's argument that we need to increase the amount of grazing domesticated animals in order to rehabilitate eroded lands. Savory is a man who virtually stands alone in the scientific community by claiming that adding MORE domesticated animals to deforested and desertified land will somehow rehabilitate land!

It's quite clear that deforestation and desertification are happening almost single-handedly BECAUSE of animal agriculture. Dr. Richard Oppenlander, author of *Food Choice and Sustainability: Why Buying Local, Eating Less Meat, and Taking Baby Steps Won't Work*, published an excellent article debunking Savory's arguments.

#### **5. *Shouldn't we be worrying about nuclear energy, other dirty energy forms, and the transportation sector before worrying about animal agriculture?***

According to a 2009 WorldWatch Institute report, animal agriculture is responsible for emitting at least 51% of all greenhouse gases. This places animal agriculture at the top of the list in terms of addressing concerns and making steps towards reversing climate change. This isn't to say that other contributors to global warming and mass species extinction aren't important. Indeed, we should move to sustainable energies with haste.

However, the transition to a vegan diet achieves immediate gains by both reducing methane emissions from farmed animals in the short-term, and by freeing up land now used for grazing and feed-crops to be reforested for long-term sequestration of CO2.