

Sustainable Eating: The Complex Relationship



The Planetary Health Plate

Source: EAT-Lancet Commission, 2019



Maintaining a Livable Planet

- ❖ Right now, the local ecosystems and stability of the Earth system is threatened.
- ❖ The impacts of greenhouse-gas emissions, nitrogen phosphorus pollution, biodiversity loss, and water and land use will reduce stability of Earth systems.

Good Health

- ❖ 820+ M people in the world have insufficient food or malnutrition.
- ❖ Changing current diets to this “healthy diet” can avert 11.1 M people from premature death or morbidity per year.
- ❖ **Healthy diets** = appropriate energy intake + ↑ plant-based foods, nuts, legumes, fruits, and vegetables + ↓ red meat/animal-based foods, saturated fats, added sugars, and processed foods.

Food Choices

- ❖ Global food production is the largest environmental pressure caused by humans.
- ❖ Substantial shifts towards healthy dietary patterns, large reductions of food loss and waste, and improvement of food production practices are required for a sustainable food system.

Agricultural Practices

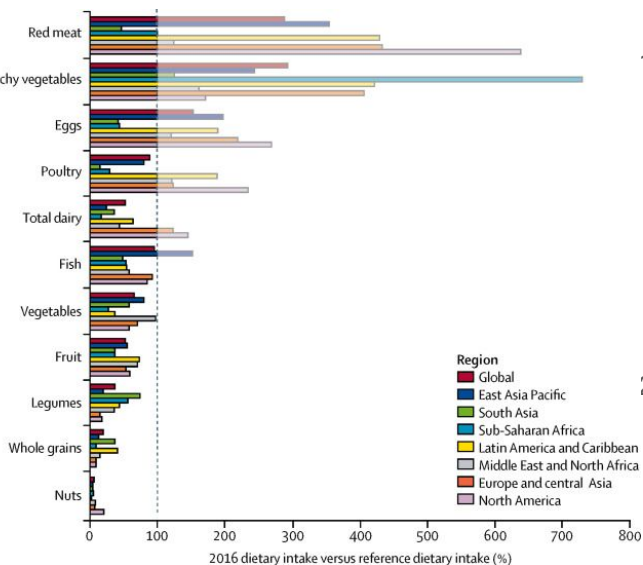
- ❖ Sustainable food production for ~10 B people should use no additional land, be protective of existing biodiversity, reduce nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, produce 0 CO2 emissions, and no additional methane and nitrous oxide emissions.
- ❖ **Sustainable food production** = at least 75% ↓ yield gaps, global redistribution of fertilizer use, recycling of phosphorus, improved efficiency of fertilizer and water, implementation of agricultural mitigation to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, adoption of land management practices from a carbon source to sink, and shift in production priorities.



Future Food Production

- ★ With the projected population growth of ~10 B by 2050, current dietary trends will exacerbate risks to *both* people and the planet.
- ★ Healthy diets from sustainable food systems is necessary to meet the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and the **Paris Climate Agreement**.

What Can YOU Do for Sustainable Eating?



1. **Food Choices:** a healthy and sustainable diet should be mindful of scientifically-based nutrition recommendations that align with sustainable boundaries. This is not pointing to food restriction or deprivation, as the diet should still be flavorful and enjoyable.
2. **Quantities:** generally speaking, **consume less** red meat, dairy, some farmed fish. **Consume more** nuts, beans, legumes (plant-based proteins), whole grains, local & seasonal produce.

3. **Food Loss & Waste:** Americans throw out ~21% of food they purchase (USDA, 2014). In fact, 31% of seafood/fish produced is wasted at the consumer level, and 49% of fresh produce is wasted at consumer level. Being mindful of your food purchases can help to reduce unnecessary food waste. Recycle, compost, and donate what you can.
4. **Shopping & Preparation:** before grocery shopping, plan how often you want to cook for the week to only buy food needed. When eating out, only order as much as you can eat. Remember to bring your own bags when you go to the grocery store!
 - a. Tip: “Sell by” dates are not expiration dates; they are manufacturer suggestions for consumption at peak quality, but most foods are still safe for consumption.

Relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

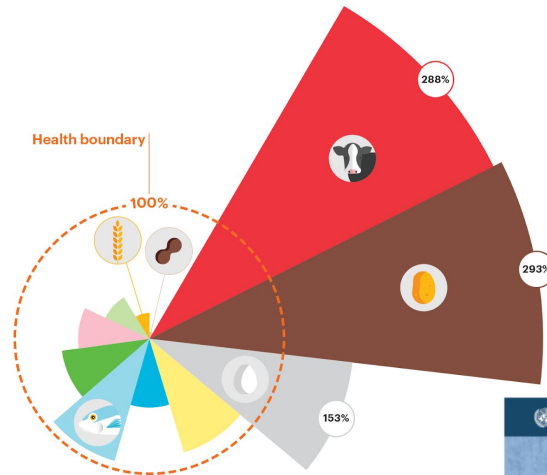
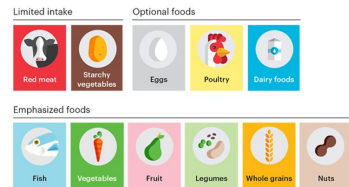


Actions Items for You to Use with Your Clients & Patients:

Current Diets vs Planetary Health Diet

The Planetary Health Diet

Global



	Macronutrient intake grams per day (possible range)	Caloric intake kcal per day
Whole grains Rice, wheat, corn and other	232	811
Tubers or starchy vegetables Potatoes and cassava	50 (0-100)	39
Vegetables All vegetables	300 (200-600)	78
Fruits All fruits	200 (100-300)	126
Dairy foods Whole milk or equivalents	250 (0-500)	153
Protein sources		
Beef, lamb and pork	14 (0-28)	30
Chicken and other poultry	29 (0-58)	62
Eggs	13 (0-25)	19
Fish	28 (0-100)	40
Legumes	75 (0-100)	284
Nuts	50 (0-75)	291
Added fats		
Unsaturated oils	40 (20-80)	354
Saturated oils	11.8 (0-11.8)	96
Added sugars		
All sugars	31 (0-31)	120

- **Have clear definitions and goals.** Define “healthy diet” and “sustainable practices” very specifically.
- **Use charts and images** created by the EAT-Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems. The visuals are a strong representation of the problem and solution guidelines.
- **Introduce the Sustainable Development Goals in Action app** to remind and keep people on track.
- **Invite their family** to get involved in the process. Ask clients to speak up about the health and sustainability problems to help generate greater awareness.
- **Individualize the advice** to the person’s unique dietary needs and lifestyle.

