

Academic Essay, Subject overview

Subject Meat Consumption

The Problem of Increasing Meat Consumption

According to research by Worldwatch Institute's *Nourishing the Planet project*, Global meat production and consumption have increased rapidly in recent decades, with harmful effects on the environment and public health. Over the last forty years, meat production has tripled and industrialised countries are consuming growing amounts of meat. For example, in North America, it is estimated that the average person consumes around 322 grams of meat every day and in China the figure is 160 grams per day.

Experts claim that large scale meat production has serious **implications** for the world's climate. This is because animals **emit methane**, a well-known **greenhouse gas** into the atmosphere. The earth has a natural supply of greenhouse gases, designed to capture heat and keep the planet warm. However, as countries have become more industrialised and meat production has increased, more gases have been added, building up beyond the earth's capacity to remove them. Another environmental concern related to meat production is the amount of land, water and grain needed to raise **livestock**. Rainforests are lost in order to create **cattle ranches** and a large amount of water is used to raise cattle instead of crops. It is also estimated that the system of farming grain-fed livestock accounts for 40% of global grain stocks.

As the global demand for meat has grown, so have the number of **factory farms**. These huge farms, where animals are crowded together, can result in diseases such as **mad-cow disease**. Farmers attempt to reduce the impact of these diseases by using **antibiotics** and **growth hormones** on their livestock; however, this may result in health problems in humans as bacteria can become resistant to the drugs. Some people say that simply eating meat, with or without antibiotics, is bad for the health and that the solution is a plant based diet. **Persuading** people to do this, however, may be challenging.

Governments around the world are also considering ways of cutting meat consumption, including possible **taxation**. However, powerful **opponents** and **interference** in an individual's choices would not make such a solution easy.

Vocabulary

1. Understanding how words are formed

Look at the following explanation for word meaning.

Carnivore – *carn* (Latin) – flesh/meat *vore* (Latin) feeding from a certain food

(Carnivore means animals that rely on meat for their diet.)

Herbalis – (Latin) belonging to plants or herbs.

Omni – (Latin) is a prefix meaning all.

Now look at the following words and try and guess the meaning.

(A) Herbivore =

(B) Omnivore =

2. Useful words

(A) Vegan =

(B) Vegetarian =

(C) Consume =

(D) Factory farm =

(E) Organic =

(F) Free-range =

(H) Substitute =

(I) Unethical =

(J) Free choice =

3. Matching words to meanings

A	Antibiotics	...	01	The act of raising taxes.
B	Cattle ranches	...	02	To intrude/intervene on another's choices.
C	Emit	...	03	A group of drugs that treats bacterial infections.
D	Factory farms	...	04	A gas that is produced by cows.
E	Greenhouse gases	...	05	A rare illness suffered by cattle and that can be contracted from eating.
F	Growth hormones	...	06	People who fight against or disagree with something.
G	Implications	...	07	Convince. Changing someone's mind.
H	Interference	...	08	Animals.
I	Livestock	...	09	Consequences.
J	Mad-cow disease	...	10	Large industrialised farms where animals are often kept inside.
K	Methane	...	11	Gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect.
L	Opponents	...	12	Chemicals that make animals grow faster than they normally would.
M	Persuading	...	13	Farms for raising cows.
N	Taxation	...	14	Produce or discharge.

Paraphrasing Practice

Rewrite the following extracts in your own words.

(A) *Experts claim that large scale meat production has serious implications for the world's climate. This is because animal waste releases methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.*

(Summarise this into one sentence.)

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(B) Another environmental concern related to meat production is the amount of land, water and grain needed to raise livestock. Rainforests are lost in order to create pasture for cattle and a large amount of water is used to raise cattle instead of crops.

(Summarise this into one sentence.)

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(C) As the global demand for meat has grown, so have the number of factory farms. These huge farms, where animals are crowded together, can result in diseases such as mad-cow disease. Farmers attempt to reduce the impact of these diseases by using antibiotics on their livestock; however, this may result in health problems in humans as bacteria become resistant to the drugs..

(Summarise this into one or two sentences.)

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Analysing the text

(A) The solution claims that government want to start taxation to stop the problem. Why do you think some people feel that this solution would cause a problem? You can go online and look for answers.

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(B) Based on your own beliefs and ideas, what do you think individuals can do to reduce their meat consumption? Think of two ways that can be used.

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Citation Refresher

Look at the following in-text citations, which (A, B, C or D) are written correctly?

1. Adams, T. (2009). *Advantages of small loans*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- A. (Adams 2009)
- B. (Advantages of Small Loans, 2009)
- C. (Adams, 2009)
- D. (Adams T., 2009)

2. Benefits of Grameen Loans. (2011, October 17). Retrieved from <http://www.microfinancing.com>

- A. (Microfinancing.com, 2011)
- B. (Benefits of Grameen Loans, 2011)
- C. (Benefits of Grameen Loans, n.d.)
- D. (Benefits of Grameen Loans, (October 17)

3. Rowell, M. (2016, April 26). What it's like to live in the world's most polluted city. *National Geographic*. Retrieved from, <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/>

- A. [Rowell, (2016)]
- B. (National Geographic,2016)
- C. (Rowell M. 2016)
- D. (Rowell, 2016)

4. Klein, C. Hanging gardens existed, but not in Babylon. *History*. Retrieved from www.history.com/hanging-gardens-existed-but-not-in-babylon

- A. (Klein, n.d)
- B. (Klein, n.d.)
- C. (Klein, N.D.)
- D. (Klein, nd)