

SUSTAINABLE STEPS

Brought to you by Arielle Gerstein,
Charleston County's Sustainability Coordinator

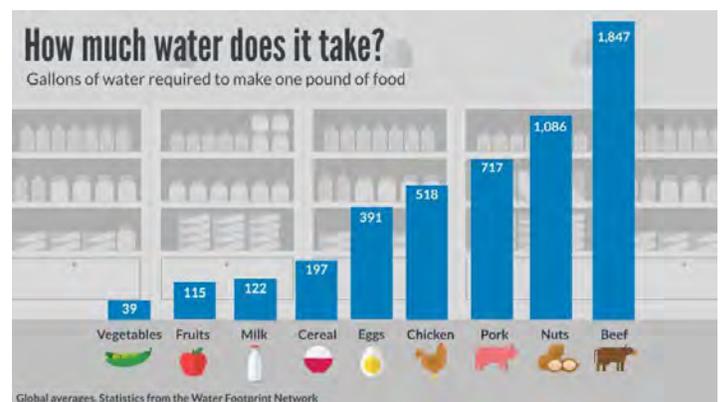
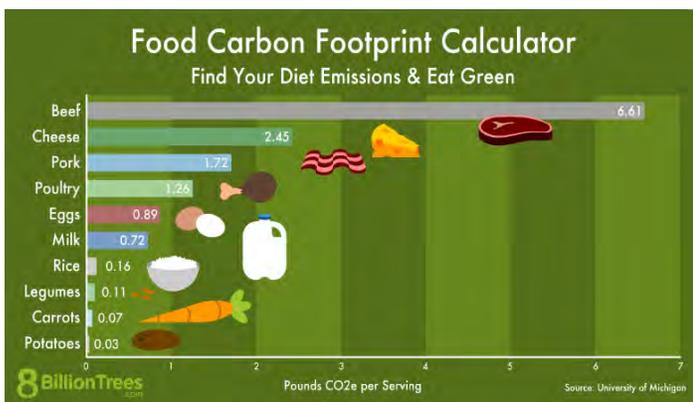
Benefits of Eating a Plant-Rich Diet

This month we are focused on plant-rich diets and why they are important.

You might already be aware of the health benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables. Incorporating more fruits and vegetables into your diet and limiting the amount of processed food is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and can reduce your risk to certain diseases. You might be less familiar with the environmental benefits of eating a plant-rich diet. You can find a list of important environmental benefits below:

1. **Saves water used in raising and processing livestock.** It takes approximately 1,800 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef, the food with the largest global water footprint. A cow eats thousands of pounds of grass, corn, grains, and soybeans during its lifetime and water is necessary to grow this diet.
2. **Reduces greenhouse gas emissions.** Cattle are the number one source of greenhouse gases worldwide. Each year a single cow will belch 220 pounds of methane.
3. **Saves habitats.** If more people eat a plant-rich diet, less future land will be needed to produce more livestock feed.
4. **Creates less pollution in our waterways, streams, and oceans.** With less or more limited livestock feed production, runoff pollution to waterways will decrease.

The images below show the amount of carbon dioxide and water it takes to produce certain foods.



For more information on Charleston County's Sustainability Program or to suggest a Sustainable Step idea, contact Arielle Gerstein at agerstein@charlestoncounty.org, or call (843) 958-4084.

