

8 September 2008

Compassion in World Farming
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WORLD'S LEADING CLIMATE EXPERT URGES MASSIVE DIETARY CHANGE

Dr Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), winner of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize is calling on individuals to cut their carbon footprints by transforming their diets at a lecture hosted by Compassion in World Farming lecture in London today (Monday 8 September 2008).

Current global animal production is responsible for 18 per cent of all human-induced GHG emissions, with more than 60 billion farm animals reared each year. That figure is set to double by 2050. The need to change our diet is increasingly urgent.

An average household would reduce the impact of their greenhouse gas emissions by more if they halved their meat consumption than if they halved their car usage.

Dr Pachauri, one of the world's leading experts on climate change, says that although people are now beginning to recognise the importance of cutting car and air journeys, insulating their homes and recycling, people don't fully realise the impact of livestock production on climate change, let alone its future impact.

"Meat production represents 18 per cent of global human-induced GHG emissions, including 37 per cent of global methane emissions, which has 23 times the Global Warming Potential of CO₂ and 65 per cent of nitrous oxide, which has 296 times the warming potential of CO₂," says Dr Pachauri.

“While the world is looking for sharp reductions in greenhouse gases responsible for climate change, growing global meat production is going to severely compromise future efforts.

“There is, as yet, inadequate awareness on this subject, though voices are rising. A small reduction can make a difference. For example, a study from the University of Chicago showed that if Americans were to reduce meat consumption by 20 per cent it would be as if they switched from a standard Sedan to the ultra-efficient Prius.”

Governments also need to act. Not only should practical mitigation measures be employed, but plans should be made to reduce the total number of livestock reared. Rearing fewer animals would also mean better welfare standards for those animals, the core concern of Compassion in World Farming.

“If we continue to consume meat and dairy at the current rate both animals and the planet will suffer. Factory farming is unsustainable and inhumane. The best thing people can do is eat less meat and dairy and eat only higher welfare – organic and free-range.” says Joyce D’Silva, Ambassador for Compassion in World Farming.

“Compassion in World Farming and Dr Pachauri urge caution on measures to reduce the impact of livestock, for example, changing cows’ diets so that they produce less methane, a highly damaging greenhouse gas. Such mitigation measures must be screened for their impact on the health and welfare of the animals themselves. For example, a diet with higher proportion of cereals to reduce their methane output is likely to cause high levels of lameness, as the more acidic diet adversely affects the cattle’s feet. Using yet more cereals for animal feed could also worsen the current food crisis,” concludes Joyce D’Silva.

Notes:

For more information:

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Event details:

Global Warning! The impact of meat production and consumption on climate change; Compassion in World Farming's Peter Roberts Memorial Lecture (named after Compassion's farmer founder), The Institute of Engineering and Technology, Savoy Place, Westminster, London WC2R 0BL

Monday 8 September at 6.30pm, registration from 5.45pm

Journalists are welcome to attend by prior notice

A discussion panel includes:

- **Professor Robert Watson**, Chief Scientific Adviser for DEFRA
- **Dr Henning Steinfeld**, Head of Livestock, FAO, author "Livestock's Long Shadow"
- **Dr John Powles**, Institute of Public Health at Cambridge University
- **Felicity Lawrence**, The Guardian, author "Not on the Label" and "Eat your Heart Out"
- **Joyce D'Silva**, Compassion in World Farming, Ambassador

For more detailed information on agriculture and climate change see Compassion in World Farming's report *Global Warning: Climate change and animal welfare* downloadable at <http://www.ciwf.org.uk/globalwarning>