

NEWS RELEASE



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Compassion in World Farming  
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## **SUSTAINABILITY EXPERT: FOOD IS THE WEAK LINK**

**Lester Brown, founder of both the prestigious Earth Policy Institute and the ground-breaking WorldWatch Institute, is launching his latest book 'Plan B 4.0' at a lecture hosted by Compassion in World Farming in London on Thursday 29 October 2009. In his book, Brown calls on individuals to reduce their meat consumption. An 80 per cent cut in carbon emissions is needed by 2020 if governments want to tackle food security.**

Brown is launching his book '*Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*', the latest update of a groundbreaking blueprint for avoiding catastrophic climate change. "The world is entering a new food era, one marked by rising food prices, growing numbers of hungry people, emerging politics of food scarcity and an intensifying competition for land and water resources that has now crossed national boundaries" Brown writes.

"Grain producers such as India and China are facing irrigation water losses and could face grain production declines. A World Bank study of India's water balance notes that 15 percent of its grain harvest is produced by overpumping. In human terms, 175 million Indians are being fed with grain produced from wells that will be going dry."

Compassion in World Farming's Ambassador, Joyce D'Silva, comments: "Intensive animal production is a very wasteful way of using land, energy and water. If you think that eating a steak is the equivalent of taking 51 showers, it's easy to see why we should all consider reducing our meat consumption. The amount of water needed to produce 1 Kilogram of beef is more than what a person needs in a whole year. Factory farming is inefficient, unsustainable and inhumane."

In Plan B 4.0 Lester Brown calls on individuals to reduce their meat and dairy consumption to fight climate change: "Dietary changes can make a difference. Those of

us with diets heavy in fat-rich livestock products can do both ourselves and civilization a favor by moving down the food chain.”

“Whether we bike, bus, or drive to work will affect carbon emissions, climate change, and food security. The size of the car we drive to the supermarket and its effect on climate may indirectly affect the size of the bill at the supermarket checkout counter. If we are living high on the food chain, we can move down, improving our health while helping to stabilize climate. Food security is something in which we all have a stake—and a responsibility”.

In order for the world to be able to cope with an increase in population and human food demand, Brown urges governments to cut emissions by 80 per cent by 2020. “Given the role of food shortages in earlier civilizational declines, we obviously should watch food price and hunger trends closely. The growing number of hungry people, the projected continuation of this trend, and the lack of a plan to reverse it should be a matter of concern to political leaders everywhere” Brown writes.

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## Notes to the editor

### Event details

#### **Peter Roberts Memorial Lecture**

### **HOW CAN WE FEED THE WORLD AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?**

#### **Thursday 29 October 2009 at 19.30, Savoy Place, London, WC2R 0BL**

Lester Brown’s talk will be followed by an expert panel discussion. Panellists include **Dr Jimmy Smith, Team Leader – Livestock at the World Bank**, Andrea Gavinelli, Head of the Animal Welfare unit established by the **European Commission’s** DG Sanco, **Peter Melchett**, Policy Director of the Soil Association and **Joyce D’Silva**, expert in farm animal welfare issues and **Ambassador for Compassion in World Farming**.

The Lecture is named in honour of the charity’s founder, a dairy farmer. Since 1967 Compassion in World Farming has campaigned for an end to factory farming for the benefit of animals, people and planet. Previous Peter Roberts Memorial Lectures were given in 2008 and 2007. The 2008 lecture was given by Dr Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, joint winner of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. The 2007 lecture was given by John Mackey, CEO of Whole Foods Market.

#### **Lester Brown**

- Lester Brown will present his latest book ***Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*** on the **29<sup>th</sup> October** in London at the Peter Roberts Memorial Lecture

- Plan B 4.0 is the latest update of Lester Brown's blueprint for avoiding catastrophic climate change and can be downloaded at [http://www.earth-policy.org/images/uploads/book\\_files/pb4book.pdf](http://www.earth-policy.org/images/uploads/book_files/pb4book.pdf)
- On water in India: John Briscoe, *India's Water Economy: Bracing for a Turbulent Future* (New Delhi: World Bank, 2005)

#### **Water usage in beef production**

- 15500 litres of water are needed to produce 1kg of beef, so a 300g steak would use 4650 L of water.  
A low flow output shower head (DEFRA recommendation) uses 9 l/min, a ten minute shower would use 90 litres of water.  $4650/90 = 51.67$   
So for an economical shower head, you could have 51 showers in place of a 300g portion of beef.
- Basic water requirement **per person per year** is **18,250 litres** (Liu J. and Savenije H. 2008). Water requirement to produce **1kg meat** can be **up to 20,000 litres** (Lunqvist J. et al. 2008 (SIWI)).
- For further information on the climate impact of factory farming see Compassion in World Farming's latest report "Beyond Factory Farming - Sustainable Solutions for Animals, People and the Planet" available on [www.ciwf.org/beyondfactoryfarming](http://www.ciwf.org/beyondfactoryfarming)

**For further information or to arrange interviews contact Valentina Moressa on 01483 521952 or 07771 926005 (out of office hours) or email [valentina@ciwf.org](mailto:valentina@ciwf.org)**