



Don't Have a Cow

By Jenny Abel

I'm borrowing the headline for this Meatless Monday feature from a recent issue of *Green American*. In the issue they do a great job outlining the impact of beef consumption on climate change and the difference that reducing that consumption could make. "If you want to reduce the environmental impact of your diet—particularly its contribution to the climate crisis—the **single most powerful thing you can do is to eat less beef**," the *Green American* editors tell us. They go on to say that "according to the United Nations, raising beef and dairy cattle generates more than nine percent of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, more than the transportation sector."

Americans ate 57.4 lbs. of beef per capita in 2012, more than any other type of meat. While lamb's climate impact is actually bigger than beef's (13.3 kg. of CO₂ are emitted for every 1,000 food calories compared to 10.8 kg. for beef), Americans only consumed 0.6 lbs. of lamb per capita in 2012, making beef the much bigger problem. The average American's diet contributes 3.0 tons of CO₂ to the atmosphere each year, compared to 2.0 tons for a lacto-ovo vegetarian and 1.5 tons for a vegan. For someone not ready to eliminate all meat from their diet, cutting out beef and relying on poultry and fish for their protein sources can reduce one's impact from 3.0 to 2.5 tons/year.

Denis Hayes, co-author of the book *Cowed: The hidden impact of 93 million cows on America's Health, Economy, Politics, Culture, and Environment*, suggest the following plan for easing into reduced meat consumption:

1. Limit your beef consumption to no more than half a pound per week. This works out to a 70% reduction for the average American. When you do eat beef, make sure that it's organic, grass-fed, and local.
2. Consider going vegetarian or vegan at least part-time, like by skipping meat on Mondays as we've been advocating in this column. You can also try the suggestion of *New York Times* food writer Mark Bittman and "go vegan 'til 6," i.e. choose vegan meals until dinnertime every day.
3. Next, try to add in more vegetarian and vegan meals throughout the week, until you cut your overall meat and dairy consumption by half.
4. "If you can go vegetarian or vegan for good, you'll do even more for the climate, the Earth, animals, and your health," say the *Green American* editors.

For this month's recipe I've chosen two easy-to-prepare dishes that go great together and add a lot of color to your plate.

Roasted Vegetables

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled and chopped into 1-inch pieces
- 1 head cauliflower, florets chopped into bite-sized pieces

1 tsp. thyme
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. rosemary
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
2 tbsp. olive oil

Preheat oven to 400. Cover a cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Spread vegetables on cookie sheet and toss with the spices and oil until everything is well coated. Bake for 40-50 minutes until vegetables are golden brown and easily pierced with a fork.

*Root vegetables are in abundance this time of year and this recipe can easily be adapted to suit any that you have on hand. Try roasting sweet potatoes and parsnips and using paprika and chili powder in place of the thyme and rosemary. Other great choices are beets, turnips, celery root, and white potatoes. Feel free to experiment with spices. Another good one to add to the butternut squash and cauliflower mixture is oregano. Any kind of squash is good for roasting—I've chosen butternut squash because I find it the easiest to work with.

Sauteed Kale

2 tsp. olive oil
1 bunch of curly kale
4 cloves of garlic, minced
Parmesan cheese, optional

Rinse kale, remove leaves from stems, and chop leaves into bite-sized pieces. Heat oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add kale and saute until bright green. Add garlic and stir until it just begins to turn golden. I like to add garlic at this point rather than at the beginning because adding it when the kale is already in the pan minimizes the risk of burning. Remove from heat and stir in a few gratings of Parmesan, if desired. Serve with roasted vegetables from the recipe above.

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