



# 10 REASONS TO OPT OUT OF INDUSTRIAL MEAT



CENTER FOR  
FOOD SAFETY

## 1. For Our Health

Overconsumption of meat is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, obesity, stroke, certain cancers, type-2 diabetes, and a shorter life span. The meat industry's practice of dousing healthy food animals with medically-important antibiotics is making those antibiotics less effective where we need them: treating bacterial infections in humans.

## 2. For Food Workers

Trauma-related injuries occur at animal factories at 6.5 times the rate of all other manufacturing jobs. Industrial livestock workers have increased presence of the dangerous strain of resistant staph infection (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)).

## 3. For Pollinators

The production of feed crops for industrial meat production, like corn and soy, threatens pollinators by subjecting them to high rates of toxic pesticides, destroying their habitat, and exposing them to animal drugs and feed additives found in industrial animal manure that is applied to crops.

## 4. For Water Conservation

One pound of industrial beef requires 1,799 gallons of water. One pound of industrial pork requires 576 gallons of water. And one pound of industrial chicken requires 468 gallons. The United Nations has identified animal factories as major contributors to increasing water depletion.

## 5. For Animals

Industrial animal factories torture and cruelly abuse food animals through severe, painful physical alterations and the regular use of growth promoting drugs that impair animal health. Beta-agonist drugs have been linked to immobilization, stomach ulcers, brain lesions, blindness, lethargy, respiratory problems, heart failure, and higher mortality rates in cattle.

## 6. For Climate

Animal factories are responsible for 18% of global GHG production and over 7% of GHG emissions in the U.S. Grain-based livestock feeds are grown with synthetic fertilizers, which contribute 65% of nitrous oxide and 30 million tons of ammonia emissions annually.

## 7. For Community Health

Chronic exposure to emissions from animal factories can lead to asthma and asphyxiation. The stench from animal factories, such as hog facilities in North Carolina and Iowa, inhibits nearby residents from engaging in outdoor activities and permeates into their homes.

## 8. For Food Safety

A single package of factory-raised ground meat could contain tissue from hundreds, if not thousands, of animals. A single downed cow infected with a pathogen such as *E. coli* could contaminate more than 100,000 hamburgers with an infectious dose. Animal factories create virulent strains of infections, like MRSA, a serious antibiotic-resistant staph infection.

## 9. For Farmers

Consolidation has forced smaller farmers to leave the industry. In the beef industry, only four companies process 85% of the cattle in the U.S. Contracts take advantage of individual farmers' and operators' liberties to make decisions and dictate specific feed, medication, and production methods.

## 10. For Local Economies

The presence of animal factories can reduce nearby property values by 10% due to persistent odors, pollution risks, and insect infestations. Corporations that own animal factories purchase very few inputs locally. In contrast, small producers spend twice as much on local expenditures and purchase 85% of inputs locally.

Learn more and take action: [www.endindustrialmeat.org](http://www.endindustrialmeat.org)



# HOW TO OPT OUT OF INDUSTRIAL MEAT

## 1. Choose Certified Humane, Organic, and Pasture-Raised Meat Products

Whether choosing to eat meat occasionally or reducing the portion size of meats in your meals, the protein that you do eat must come from certified humane, organic, and pasture-raised sources. Certification standards for these products do not allow routine, non-therapeutic use of animal drugs, and prohibit the use of growth promoters. Additionally, meat from grassfed cows have been shown to be higher in omega-3 fatty acids. It is also higher in vitamins E, A, and C, and has lower total fat and caloric content than grain-fed meat.

## 2. Eat Meat Occasionally

There are many benefits to eating meat less frequently. Eating less meat is shown to correspond with consuming more plant-based foods like grains, fruits, and vegetables. It can also make buying certified organic, humane, and pasture-raised meats more practical. The price of these organic, humane, and pasture-raised meats may make them seem inaccessible, but the higher price is an investment in your personal health and the health of the planet. If you cut your meat intake in half, buying organic, humane, and pasture-raised meats shouldn't make your total food budget increase. Supporting certified producers also contributes to the growth and vitality of your local economy, ensuring more jobs and more dollars are invested back in to your community.

## 3. Eat More Organic and Non-GMO Plant Proteins

Diets high in organic and non-GMO plant proteins help to lower the risk of heart disease, lower cholesterol, lower systolic blood pressure, reduce risk of obesity in children, and lower mortality. Beans, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables that are certified organic are required to be produced in a way that maintains or improves the natural resources of the farm and the surrounding ecosystem, including water, soil, and biodiversity. There is also mounting evidence that organic plant foods offer significant health benefits over their conventional counterparts, most notably a substantial reduction in exposure to toxic pesticide residues.



*Take the Pledge!*

*I pledge to cut the meat I eat in half for the next year.*

*When I do eat meat, I will source certified humane, organic, and pasture-raised meats.*

*I will eat more plant-based foods that are high in protein like beans, lentils, peas, chickpeas, nuts, seeds, and quinoa.*



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