



Reduce your carbon footprint with the Mediterranean diet

If everybody moved towards the Mediterranean diet, which has extra virgin olive oil at its core, then it would be the equivalent to removing about a billion cars of pollution out of the planet every year.

The seemingly outlandish claim that the adoption of a certain diet could help reduce global warming by up to 15 percent by 2050 is based on climate models developed at the John Muir Institute of the Environment at the University of California (UC), a pioneer on climate research, renewable energy and environmental sustainability.

Overseen by Professor Benjamin Houlton, the study included tracking the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are produced by certain types of diet. Food production has a dramatic impact on the environment, with agriculture and land use responsible for nearly a quarter of all global emissions driven largely by nitrogen fertilizers.

According to the study, the vegan diet had the lowest impact and it was closely followed by the vegetarian diet. However, the UC researchers were not only surprised to find the Mediterranean diet in third place, but that it also has a carbon footprint almost as small as the other two and four-times less than the American diet.

The study was originally published in 2017, but interest in its findings have been renewed in recent months possibly thanks to the actions of Swedish teenage environmental activist Greta Thunberg. The so-called "Greta effect" is inspiring people to reduce their own carbon footprint, including giving up air travel and changing their diet.

Adopting the Mediterranean diet proves that helping to save the earth and eating meat are not mutually exclusive. It also means that you do not have to become vegan or vegetarian. Instead of cutting down on carbs or calories, the UC study emphasizes the power of reducing the carbon from your diet because, as Greta proves, even one person can make a difference.

"This is one area where we have the power as individuals to make a significant impact on climate change right now," Houlton told American news website Vox. "It's very easy to get depressed, to feel sad about all the changes that are happening and feel like you can't contribute to the solution. Well, here is a shovel-ready opportunity."

The Mediterranean diet includes vegetables, fish, nuts, and extra virgin olive oil, as well as chicken and red meat occasionally. Regularly praised by scientists in published studies, it avoids the processed meats, dairy, trans and saturated fats and refined sugars often found in the traditional Western diet.

Research has found that a Mediterranean diet can reduce dementia risks, the incidence of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and intestinal inflammation, as well as deter overeating and give diabetics improved memory.

Many of the health benefits are linked to oleic acid, one of the key nutrients in the Mediterranean diet. It is found naturally in many food sources, but most notably in extra virgin olive oil—boasting a range of 55-83 percent of this beneficial monounsaturated fatty acid. Italian varieties are said to contain the highest level of this beneficial acid.

The international TAICHI project is spreading information about the health benefits of using extra virgin olive oil for cooking to Mainland China and Taiwan.



CAMPAIGN FINANCED
WITH AID FROM
THE EUROPEAN UNION

THE EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS
CAMPAIGNS THAT PROMOTE
A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.

www.ouroliveoil.com





Co-funded by the EU and promoted by the two main consortia of Italian olive growers, Italia Olivicola and UNAPOL, the TAICHI project offers consumers all the information they need to understand olive oil through its website, various social media platforms and OurOliveOil APP – available in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

Sources:

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/how-your-diet-affects-climate-change>

<https://www.vox.com/videos/2017/12/12/16762900/mediterranean-diet-pescatarian-climate-change>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10584-017-1912-5>

To find out more about the TAICHI project, visit OurOliveOil.com

Follow us



THE EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS CAMPAIGNS THAT PROMOTE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.

www.ourliveoil.com

