

VEGANISM: THE DIET FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Local and Global Impacts

Local

- Local agriculture favors plant based diets, allowing for more people to have access to food.
- It is up to 746.46 dollars per year cheaper for an individual to eat a plant based diet over one that contains animal products. (Flynn and Schiff, 2015)

Global

- In the United States, 41 percent of greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture, 90 percent of which are from beef production. (Varanasi, 2019)
- The vegan diet produces the lowest carbon footprint out of any diet, allowing for global carbon emissions to decrease with an increase in the vegan population. (Chai et al. 2019)

What does it mean to be vegan?

A person who strictly eats plant based products and avoids all animal based products.

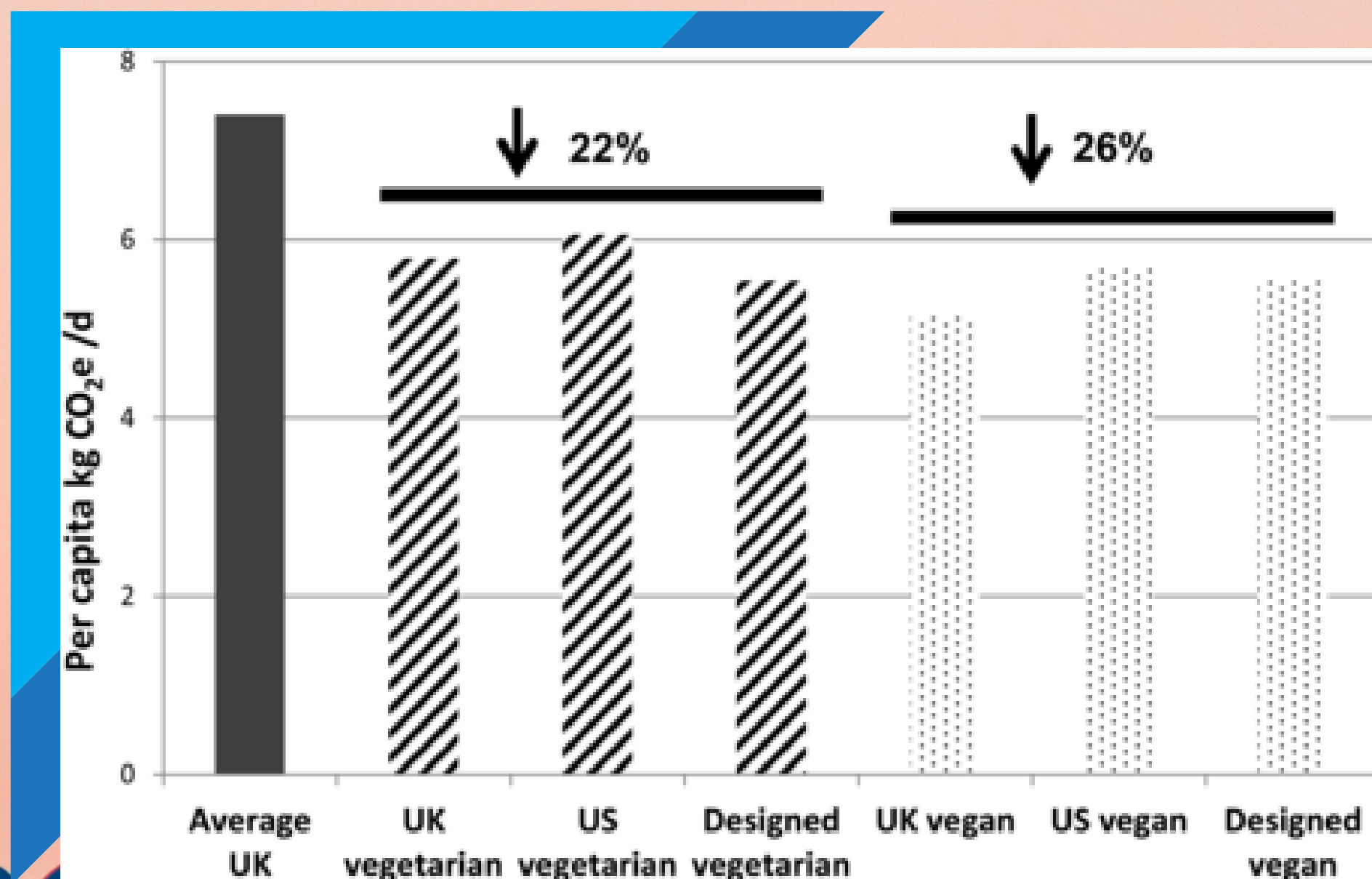
Pros and Cons

Pros

- The vegan diet is considered one of the healthiest diets for an individual. Cutting large amounts of red meat out of your diet can lower your risk of heart disease.
- A vegan diet has 49.6 percent less environmental footprint than that of a diet that has meat in it. (Down to Earth, 2018)

Cons

- Individuals that go on vegan diets can experience issues with nutrition as they must adjust to finding new food to supplement for things such as protein.
- When there is a high demand for vegan products, these goods often are imported. This increases the products carbon footprint and cost. (Gray, 2020)



Conclusion

Individuals that switch to a vegan diet can see increases in overall health and decrease in their carbon footprint. If more people were to switch to a vegan diet, world carbon emissions would lower because the agriculture sector could switch its focus away from the meat industry.

Personal and Systematic Impacts

- A study from the University of Copenhagen determined that veganism was the diet that lowered carbon emissions the most. (Chai et al. 2019)
- Majority of agriculture is dedicated to meat and animal product production, leaving less land for non animal products/food to be produced on.

Societal Limitations

- Many economies rely on their exports of beef and other animal products. If a large population of people were to switch to veganism than these economies would suffer from the decrease in demand of animal products.
- The current agricultural infrastructure in some countries may not be able to keep up with the demand for non animal products if there were a large percent increase in the vegan population.

By Gavin Plimpton

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