

# The environmental necessity of vegetarianism



Derek Weatherford Period 5 March 31, 2008 The Environmental Necessity of Vegetarianism The reasons for abandoning a meat based diet go far beyond the nutritional and ethical; eating meat is also extremely destructive to the environment. With the explosive growth of the world population and increasing affluence in many Asian countries, global resources are under increasing strain. Aggravating this strain is the consumption of meat. Assembly-line meat factories consume enormous amounts of energy, pollute water supplies, generate significant greenhouse gases, and require ever-increasing amounts of corn, soy, and other grains (Bittman). Because of this, many experts agree that a vegan diet can have one of the most profound and positive impacts on the health of the planet (Gaechter).

Because of pollution, wasted resources and destruction of rain forests, a vegetarian diet is an environmental necessity.

The Pollution of the Water Supply: In many places across the planet, water can be a life or death commodity. Even though two thirds of the planet is covered by water, the amount of freshwater is actually much less. Geologists believe that the total amount of available freshwater equals approximately two percent of the water on the planet, only half of that is suitable for human uses like showers, plumbing, industry, and agriculture (World Resources Institute). Furthermore, experts calculate that humans are now taking half of the available fresh water on the planet, leaving the other half to be divided among more than one million species.

(WorldWatch) With the amount of available water limited, it is imperative that humans limit our effect on such a vital resource. Because of the

prodigious production of manure that characterizes farm animals, the animal agriculture sector is the single largest contributor to water pollution in the world (UN Food and Agriculture Organization). To get an idea of the sheer scale of the problem, here are some...