

**Submission
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FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUPPLY IN NSW

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The United Nations has identified animal agriculture as 'one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems', including climate change, species extinction, loss of fresh water, rainforest destruction, spreading deserts, air and water pollution, acid rain, soil erosion and loss of habitat. Vast areas of forest are cleared to grow crops to feed farmed animals. The methane produced by these animals is the largest single cause of global warming, larger than all transport worldwide. Large quantities of excrement produced by animal industries leak into rivers and oceans as pollution.

Instead of growing crops to feed animals who we then eat, it would be much more efficient and cause less harm to the environment if we consumed the plants directly. This would feed five times as many people, make available significant amounts of fresh water, help reverse global warming, use less fossil fuels and allow large areas of land to be reforested.

"Producing meat turns vegetable protein very inefficiently into animal protein, using large amounts of energy and water in the process. Ruminant animals also produce large amounts of methane, a much more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Meat production is a serious contribution to greenhouse gas pollution and hence global warming."

- Professor Ian Lowe

Healthdirect, the national, government-funded health information service, has published an article stating that a vegan diet can help reduce the risk of disease. The article says that "Plant-based diets can help reduce your risk of disease and provide you with all the protein, minerals and vitamins your body needs." It continues: "A vegetarian diet based on vegetables, legumes, beans, wholegrains, fruits, nuts and seeds can help reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some types of cancer. Dietary fibre in a plant-based diet increases 'good' bacteria in the bowel."

Australia's top health experts agree with those in other parts of the world that well-planned vegan diets are safe and healthy for all age groups.