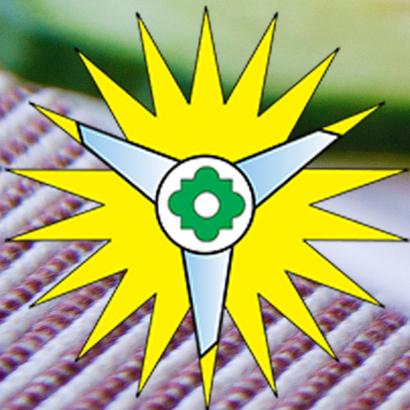


10 Principles of Earth-Friendly, Healthy Eating

By Dr. Kathy Shea



By North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light



Dr. Shea's 10 Principles of Earth Friendly, Healthy Eating

- 1. Eat everything you buy**
 - 25% (some say as much as 40%) of food purchased in the USA goes to waste. Buying and cooking only what you need, avoiding waste and spoilage is good stewardship and good economics!
- 2. Eat enough (but not too much)**
 - 2/3 of American adults and 17% of American children are overweight or obese. If we eat only what we need (most of the time) we are living in a way that promotes health and allows others to share in the bounty of Creation.
- 3. Cook from scratch and compost cooking scraps and foods that are not eaten**
 - Returning the nutrients to the food chain cycle promotes soil health, reduces the need for fertilizers and reduces the burden on landfills.
 - Cooking from scratch is vastly superior to heating up prepared, boxed, canned, or processed foods which are low on flavor and nutrition and high on carbon costs including packaging/solid waste.
- 4. Eat lower on the food chain**
 - Fruits, vegetables including legumes, and whole grains are loaded with vitamins, minerals and healthy plant based proteins that require much less energy to produce kcal per kcal than animal based foods
 - It takes 2.2 kcal of fossil fuels to produce 1 kcal of protein for a vegetarian based diet, but it takes 25 kcal of fossil fuels to produce 1 kcal of protein for a meat based diet.
- 5. Substitute chicken, fish or eggs for beef, lamb and cheese as often as possible**
 - If a family of 4 skips steak 1 day a week for a year - it would be like taking your car off the road for 5 weeks.
 - If everyone in the USA ate no meat or cheese 1 day a week for a year - it would be like not driving 91 billion miles or taking 7.6 million cars off the road.
- 6. Eat locally grown foods**
 - The average food item travels 1500 miles before it reaches your plate – eliminating food miles saves carbon.
 - Eating local foods strengthens local food economies, improves food security and helps sustain family farms.
- 7. Eat foods that are in season**
 - When we eat foods that are in season and local, they are fresher, more nutritious and they help us stay connected to the food cycle and the realities of the local weather and climate.
 - In season foods do not require as much processing and preserving – therefore generate fewer greenhouse gases.
- 8. Eat organic foods (or foods that come from farms transitioning to organic) as much as possible**
 - Organic foods do not require petroleum based inputs like artificial fertilizers and pesticides so they generate fewer GHGs.
 - Organic foods have been shown to reduce the markers of pesticide contamination in the bodies of children. Many pesticides are toxic to the human body – contributing to cancer, hormone disruption and learning difficulties among other things.
 - Supporting organic farms protects farm workers and their families (who often live adjacent to the fields) from exposure to pesticides and other toxic chemicals.
- 9. Eat animals that have been raised, fed and slaughtered in a humane way**
 - Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) are inconsistent with loving all of God's creatures.
 - CAFOs require huge inputs of conventional feedstock (heavily fossil fuel dependent), antibiotics and hormones – all of which are unhealthy for the animals, humans and the planet.
- 10. Avoid disposables in food service**
 - Using real dishes, flatware and glasses/cups reduces consumption and waste.
 - Cleaning up after a meal is a social time that can be fun and should be part of any eating experience
 - If disposables are absolutely necessary, try to make them compostable and find a compost facility that can accept them

(March 2012, references available upon request)