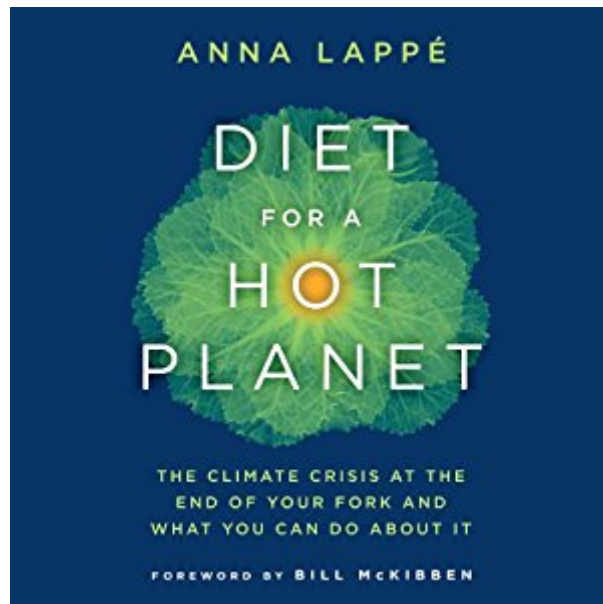


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Diet For A Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis At The End Of Your Fork And What You Can Do About It



Synopsis

Beyond what we already know about "food miles" and eating locally, the global food system is a major contributor to climate change, producing as much as one-third of greenhouse gas emissions. How we farm, what we eat, and how our food gets to the table all have an impact. And our government and the food industry are willfully ignoring the issue rather than addressing it. In Anna Lapp's controversial new book, she predicts that unless we radically shift the trends of what food we're eating and how we're producing it, food-system-related greenhouse gas emissions will go up and up and up. She exposes the interests that will resist the change, and the spin food companies will generate to avoid system-wide reform. And she offers a vision of a future in which our food system does more good than harm, with six principles for a climate friendly diet as well as visits to farmers who are demonstrating the potential of sustainable farming. In this measured and intelligent call to action, Lapp helps readers understand that food can be a powerful starting point for solutions to global environmental problems.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Many of you thinking about buying this are expecting something similar to the "Diet for a Small Planet", which is, in part, a cookbook for vegans and vegetarians. There are no recipes in this book. What this is, is a very well done discussion of green farming, agribusiness, and what to do to eat greener. There are several chapters discussing the greenwashing of agribusiness, and how marketing makes us think that products are "green" which inherently are not. It's fascinating

reading. Specifically, there has been an enormous amount of discussion in the popular press in recent years about how agribusiness-grown foods are better for the planet because they're more efficiently grown--which isn't true; the numbers that have been manufactured to make agribusiness look good don't take into account the sheer volume of fossil fuels required to transport food. There are also some interesting discussions about how to get sustainable beef: the author talks about carbon sinks in grassland; some ecologists have noted that large swaths of grassland hold even more carbon than forests. If we could just keep cows out of feedlots, then it would be a lot more o.k. to eat beef. Then, the author goes off on a "green farming" tangent that is a little hard to stomach because her ideas about real farming aren't realistic; the author goes into a long discussion of green farming and rhapsodizes at great length about "growing what would grow there naturally." No offense, but you know what grows in much of the breadbasket of the United States (California and Texas) without huge amounts of transported water? Nothing. Despite some of the unrealistic ideas, there are some neat ideas in the chapters on green farming.

This book brings out the important point that agriculture, not transportation, is the sector that makes the largest impact on global climate change. Lappe is a journalist with a lifelong interest in sustainable food (her mother wrote the classic "Diet for a Small Planet"). In this book, she discusses the various ways that our eating choices affect climate change. She explains how the practices of industrial food producers add to greenhouse gases, from fossil use to produce nitrogen fertilizers, to increased methane production from livestock waste, to clearing rainforests for crop and livestock production. She notes in particular how increased meat consumption worldwide has been responsible for more land clearance for feed production, increased production of nitrogen fertilizers to grow the feed, and increased methane release from animal waste. The book is divided into 4 sections: Crisis, Spin, Hope, and Action; the final section includes specific suggestions for how individual consumers can reduce their share of the impact food production makes on climate change. Sources are documented with endnotes. The book also includes a selected biography and a list of learning resources for further information. The book caught my attention in the first chapter, where Lappe introduces the idea that current agricultural practices pose a serious threat to the climate. I was quite interested in learning more about the issues. Lappe does an admirable job of explaining why methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, and how agriculture, especially industrial agriculture, promotes the production and release of methane. Lappe is clearly quite impassioned by the topic of climate change and environmentalism.

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