

## Sustainability & Eating – The Connection to Our Environment & Role of Health Practitioners

Webinar Questions Answered by Mary Purdy, MS, RDN

- What are the 12 foods that provide 75% of the calories?  
It may be more accurate to say 75 percent of the world's food is generated from only 12 plants and five animal species.

**Wheat, Rice, Corn, Soy, Sugarcane, (MOST from those 5) and potatoes, Palm oil, Cassava, sweet potatoes, millet, ground nuts, and sorghum. The animals are chickens, cows, pigs, buffalo and goat**

- How do you feel that non-GMO negatively impacts environment and/or health?

**Sorry if this was communicated incorrectly. I meant to convey that GMO foods can negatively affect because most of them are grown in monocultures which reduce biodiversity and tend to rely on intensive agricultural methods that harm soil and produce less nutritious crops and expose people to agrochemicals and the many environmental and health issues associated with those.**

- Thank you, Mary, for sharing your excellent understanding of agricultural and environment impacts on nutrition and health. I feel as a RD that this is a subject matter lacking in our training and outside our usual scope of practice. What helpful resources do you recommend staying in the know? Second, as a MPH very much interested in the environment, how can we connect and participate in this subject matter?

**This person actually reached out to me via email, and we have been in touch about resources for her.**

- Do you have any tips for reaching/educating underserved populations on plant forward eating?

**I think it can be helpful to go into those communities and learn about them and learn from them about what they may need. If they go to food banks, then finding a way to provide more education and tools for preparing culturally appropriate plant based meals. Find out where people in these populations are spending time – community centers? Religious institutions? Kids at school? It is also really important that people who may be underserved see people who look like them or work with/hear from people who are educated about their backgrounds and culture in order for better trust to be established. Meeting people where they are at is key.**

- We planted our first chaos garden yesterday. have you tried that?

**I haven't but it sounds fun! Climate victory gardens are also popular now.**

- Does AND have a position paper/statement/anything on this topic? Or does HEN DPG?

**There are several really terrific papers on this topic from AND**

1. **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2020 Standards of Professional Performance for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (Competent, Proficient, and Expert) in Sustainable, Resilient, and Healthy Food and Water Systems:** [https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(20\)30459-7/fulltext](https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(20)30459-7/fulltext)
2. **Cultivating Sustainable, Resilient, and Healthy Food and Water Systems: A Nutrition-Focused Framework for Action** [https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(20\)30202-1/fulltext](https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(20)30202-1/fulltext)

There is also a great primer from AND that is free: called “Sustainable Food Systems Primer for RDNs and NDTRs” found here: <https://www.eatrightfoundation.org/foundation/resources/future-of-food/sustainable-food-systems-primer-for-rdns-and-ndtrs>

This is what HEN developed: Sustainable Food Systems Certificate of Training from the Academy <https://hendpg.org/resources/sustainable-food-system-certificate-of-training>

- While we can make individual changes, it sounds like changing the systems that are in place producing our food will have the largest impact. Is there any legislation that has not yet passed that we can advocate for (or against) in the pursuit of sustainability?

**Yes! So much going on right now.**

1. **The Zero Food Waste Act**
  - a. This act would award state and local governments and Native nations grants to support the development of policies, programs, and infrastructure at the local level focused on preventing food from going to waste, rescuing surplus food, and recycling food scraps.
2. **Healthy Future Student and Earth Act**
  - a. This legislation will create a new pilot grant program to help schools provide students healthy, climate-friendly lunches.
3. **Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2020**
  - a. This bill sets forth requirements related to waste and recycling collection systems for a variety of products and materials, including plastics.
4. **The Farm System Reform Act**
  - a. Would crack down on the monopolistic practices of meatpackers and corporate integrators, place a moratorium on large factory farms, and restore mandatory country-of-origin labeling requirements