

Earth Hour 2015 - Climate change and food factsheet

How will climate change affect your favourite food? Read on to find out:

Dairy: Hot cows produce less milk; less milk means less cheese, yoghurt, icecream and milk for milkshakes. Aaaagh!

Apples and avocados: Both apples and avocados have sensitive skin. Hot weather can give apples and avocados sunburn.

Rice: Rice needs a LOT of water to grow – climate change may mean there's not enough water in the places where rice is grown now.

Honey: In very hot weather, bees get thirsty and gather water instead of nectar from flowers – this makes the honey less sweet. :(

Beef: Hot dry weather means that less grass grows on farms and farmers may have to buy expensive grain instead to feed their cows. This means the price of beef will go up and this will affect how often you'll be eating spag bol.

Wheat: Hot, dry weather means less grain and flour of reduced quality. This means our bread will become a whole lot less tasty.

Nuts: Trees that grow nuts like walnuts and almonds need cold days in winter to make flowers in spring. Without flowers, no nuts!

Cucumbers: Cucs are mostly made of water so they need a lot of it to grow. If the weather gets drier, we may not be able to grow cucs in many places that they grow now. If the weather gets too hot, cucs make more male flowers and not enough female flowers, and this reduces the crop. Not only does this mean no more cucumbers, but it might also mean no more pickles!

Potatoes: If potatoes get too hot and humid they can get a disease that makes them rot. Just try to imagine a world without chips. Disaster.

Carrots: Carrots are Australia's most popular vegetable! Carrots don't like hot weather so eventually we may only be able to grow them in Tasmania.

Onion: Onions grow best in cool weather. If it gets too hot they grow faster but don't get as big and don't taste as good.



For more information on how you can help our environment, or to make some suggestions of your own, please go to www.coolaustralia.org

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Chicken: If chickens get too hot they don't eat as much and don't lay as many eggs. Also, chooks don't like getting hot.

Capsicums: Capsicums like cooler weather and need lots of water. If it gets too hot they go yellow and can get sunburnt. BTW - there are no suncreams for vegetables.

Pork: Pigs don't have sweat glands so when it gets too hot they cannot sweat to cool down. Poor piggies!

Beetroot: Hot weather can make beets go striped and can cause them to get diseased.

Salmon: Salmon is grown in big pens in the cool seas in Tasmania. If the water gets too warm they can get a disease in their gills.

Oysters: Oysters grow in farms near the mouths of rivers. They can die if the water gets too warm. They will also be affected by ocean acidification which will affect how their shells grow.

Sugar: Many sugar cane plantations are located very close to the sea in northern Australia and will be in danger of flooding as sea levels keep rising.

Bananas: Most of Australia's bananas grow in north Queensland in places where tropical cyclones occur. In the future, these storms may get even stronger, and cause damage to banana plantations. We've already seen the cost of bananas skyrocket because of Cyclone Larry.

Peaches and plums: These trees need to have cold winter days so they can make flowers. If it gets too hot, there will be no flowers, and therefore no fruit.

Mangoes: Mango trees can get damaged in tropical cyclones, and the fruit can be sunburnt in hot weather.

Overall, the outlook for food grown in this country looks a bit grim. If we want to keep eating some of our classic Aussie meals - like vegemite on toast, pavlova and meat pies - we're going to have to start taking serious action on climate change. Maybe the best way of getting attention about climate change is through our stomachs!

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