



For Immediate Release

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EAT-Lancet Report Offers a “Fad Diet” Solution to Complex Global Issues *Report Ignores Numerous Nutrition Benefits of Meat; Overstates Environmental Impact of Animal Agriculture*

Attribute Statement to KatieRose McCullough, Ph.D., MPH, North American Meat Institute Director of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs:

"Health for people and the planet are two complex issues that demand comprehensive solutions across a range of stakeholders. Food can certainly play a role and following science-based dietary guidance is an important step toward improving people's health.

However, the EAT-Lancet Commission's recommendations differ dramatically from consensus nutrition science and U.S. dietary guidance. Americans consume the recommended amount of meat and poultry, which provide nutrition that cannot simply be replaced by another food. In fact, the report's "fad diet" approach that recommends people radically reduce or even eliminate meat from their diets could have substantial damaging public health consequences.

"The report also ignores key facts about food and climate. U.S. farmers and ranchers produce more meat and poultry than ever before, using fewer animals, less land and water, and with a smaller environmental footprint. As a result, animal agriculture accounts for just 4% of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Zeroing in on meat production and consumption as a climate change “silver bullet” solution distracts from the many changes that are needed across various sectors to create meaningful improvements.

Additional background:

Consensus dietary guidance recommends meat because it feeds the world delicious and nutritious protein and essential vitamins and minerals that cannot simply be replaced by another food. There are many serious potential consequences to drastically cutting meat from our diets:

- Meat provides all the essential amino acids in our diets. Combinations of plant-based foods and supplements can achieve this result, but must be eaten in the right combinations to ensure no deficiencies.
- Greatly reducing or eliminating meat from the diet would likely result in more food consumption, and thus more calories, to get the same nutrition meat provides. For example, to get the same amount of protein as a three-ounce serving of beef, a person needs to eat nearly a pound of black beans, more than doubling the caloric intake.

- Iron in vegetables is less bio-available than in meat. In fact, consuming meat with vegetables enhances iron absorption from both.
- Vitamin B-12, which is essential for brain health, is only available in animal products.
- [Extensive research](#) shows that diets without meat can be harmful to brain, bone, and muscle health.
- Researchers in the UK [recently found](#) that vegan diets are leading to a growth in malnutrition in developed countries.

Similarly the report's suggestions regarding meat's environmental impact greatly simplify the various reasons for climate change and ignore the many technological improvements that have made the US meat and poultry industry a model of how to produce nutritious food efficiently for a large population with as minimal an impact as possible. Considerable gains have been made to lower emissions, reduce land, water and feed use during the past 30 years and meat food systems will continue to reduce their environmental footprint by embracing new technologies and animal raising methods over the next 30 years.