

The Problems with the Beef Industry

Who Produces The Most?

The top producers of beef across the world (in metric tons) annually are:

- 1.The United States: 12.6 million
2. Brazil: 10.4 million
3. European Union: 7.7 million
4. China: 7 million
5. India: 4 million

Habitat Destruction

The beef industry contributes greatly to Habitat destruction primarily through cattle ranching. Cattle ranching is when trees are cleared out and land is turned into pastures for cows to graze on. It is estimated that “70% of deforestation in the Amazon basin can be attributed to cattle ranching”. Wetlands are also greatly threatened by cattle ranching.

What Can You Do?

I recommend that people lower their consumption of beef (and meat as a whole) in general. Im not saying that it needs to be completely eliminated from your diet, but maybe it could be scaled back. If you plan on no longer eating beef altogether, there are many great alternatives. Turkey burgers or even beyond burgers are still delicious sources of protein, and tofu is also a great alternative to beef.

Commons Used

The Beef industry uses a tremendous amount of water. The beef industry uses 15 400 m ³ /tons of water as a global average. The cattle industry also uses a significant amount of grasslands. According to the United Nations food and agriculture Organization, 26 percent of the Earth's terrestrial surface is used for livestock grazing. The cattle industry also has a massive effect on the atmosphere due to the massive amount of greenhouse gases produced from it. One kilogram of beef generates 60 kilograms of greenhouse gases.

The Impact of Climate Change

Even as one of the leading causes of climate change, the cattle industry will be negatively affected by it. increased temperatures and more intense heat waves could greatly affect livestock health. It could lead to metabolic disruptions, oxidative stress, and immune suppression. These factors could lead to infections and death amongst livestock.

Labor Issues

There is a significant amount of labor issues in the beef industry as well. “Hundreds of thousands of women and men do the killing, cutting, deboning, and packaging of American-grown meat, most of whom spend their entire shift operating as components of a continually moving dissection machine, fulfilling one need in the complex process of disassembling animals.”- Human Rights Watch.