WHAT YOU CAN DO

STOP FACTORY FARMS

1. Know Your Food.
Think about land use, health costs, social costs, animal welfare and the carbon footprint of food production.

2. Refine, Reduce and Replace Animal Products.
Consider eating smaller amounts of animal food products, participate in Meatless Mondays, and source animal products from the local farmers’ market or a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture farm).

3. Read Labels.
Labels on animal products can be misleading. Brush up on what all those labels really mean here: www.cafothebook.org/whatyoucando

Select certified organic meats, eggs, and dairy and those clearly labeled as using only vegetarian animal feed. Look for the Humane Farm Animal Care label and the terms “USDA Certified Organic” or “No Antibiotic Use.”

5. Honor Where Your Food Comes From.
Consider spending a little more on better sources and better qualities of meat and animal products, a little less often. Learn as much as you can about bringing the most savor out of your cooking. Don’t support companies who don’t care about animal rights.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO

ECO EDUCATION

1. Rally Your Community
Identify the people who share your concerns and interests, and build your efforts around them. Your allies could include students, PTA and PTO members, parents, teachers, the school nurse, board members, or local businesses.

2. Envision Smart by Nature Education
Keep the big picture in mind by developing a vision statement or a working definition of what sustainability means to your school. Visualize the Smart by Nature campus and curriculum.

3. Take Stock of School Policies
Conduct sustainability and curriculum audits to set priorities. Review the environmental impact of the school’s policies and practices in order to set priorities and establish baselines to measure your success.

4. Create Real World Learning Opportunities
Create a strategy and move from vision to action. The real world is the optimal learning environment. Make the campus a hands-on laboratory for addressing real issues around sustainability.

5. Reflect on Challenges and Successes
Close the feedback loop: monitor, evaluate, and celebrate progress. Nature is our teacher. Natural ecosystems and social systems maintain themselves, “learn,” and evolve through networks of feedback.

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1. Learn About the Farm Bill
This will require “cracking the code” of Farm Bill terminology. The USDA has a lot of useful information, including the full text of the bill itself and specialized reports.

2. Bring Local Officials Up to Speed
A local Farm Bill agenda can easily begin with a community group. Perhaps political leaders will engage once they understand the movement is legitimate.

3. Create Outreach and Educational Opportunities
Communicate to your community why they have an interest in the outcome of Farm Bill debates. Look over Environmental Working Group’s Farm Subsidy databases and other search engines to familiarize yourself with spending in your state.

4. Build Coalitions
Identify the many constituencies affected by local food systems: family farms, public health offices, economic development groups, local schools, government agencies, charities, food policy councils, social justice movements. Develop partnerships to spread the word.

5. Take the Long View
Change rarely happens over the span of just one Farm Bill. Learn about how previous gains were made— and realize that they must be supported and defended through the long processes of appropriation, implementation, rule making, and so on (and on).
WHAT YOU CAN DO

ECO DESIGN

1. Minimize Single-use Packaging
Tote groceries in a reusable cloth bag, bring your own mug to the coffee shop, avoid take-out packaging and carry a water bottle with you. Simple substitutes like these can have a big impact!

2. Be Aware of Your Ecologic Footprint
Gauge your consumption patterns and check that they are compatible with your values and hopes for the planet.

3. Know Your Farmer
Every step of food production from how it is grown, packaged and delivered to you, has an impact. Consider joining a CSA to eat in-season and reduce packaging.

4. Vote With Your Wallet
Support producers who make a conscious effort to minimize waste, use recycled products, and green production methods.

5. Manage an Ecological Household
Buy in bulk to reduce packaging, carpool, become a backyard composter, reduce the impact of any upgrades or building in your home, grow a garden.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO

FARMING WITH THE WILD

1. Eat Consciously!
Seek out local and in season foods, look for Organic and GMO-free certified products and make sure animal products are humanely pasture raised.

2. Consider the Natural Habitat of Farm Areas
Support farmers that protect the landscape with buffers that help to clean air and water and provide space for native species.

3. Support a Grass-based Conservation Economy
Grass pastured livestock operations can provide year-round habitat that makes for healthier animals, protects the soil, captures carbon from the atmosphere and sustains birds and other species.

4. Look for “Predator-Friendly” Products
Mountain lions, wolves, coyotes and other predators are often maligned by the ranching community, who are legitimately concerned about animal losses.
Forward thinking livestock producers use guard animals and other management techniques to coexist with wild species that might threaten livestock.

5. Help Migratory Species through Ecolabels
Shade grown coffee producers provide critical habitat for migratory birds that overwinter in the tropics. In the United State’s Pacific Northwest, Salmon Safe products require that landowners enhance water quality for endangered fish.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO

URGENT RESOURCE ISSUES

1. Exercise Your Energy Literacy
   Take the Energy Reality Pledge: www.energy-reality.org/pledge/

2. Practice Mindful Conservation
   Cut down on your water use and reuse water as often as possible.
   Install a low flow showerhead, fix leaks, eat less meat and avoid disposable products. Take the water footprint calculator quiz at www.gracelinks.org/1408/water-footprint-calculator

3. Support Regional Self-sufficiency
   Support resilience against resource shortages by engaging in activities that are rooted in local production and conservation. In other words, meet your needs locally whenever possible and practical — especially when you can do things for yourself.

4. Get Organized
   Carpool, use electronic timers, plan shopping trips, become vigilant about making the most of the energy and resources you do consume.

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