

ISSUE PAPER

# LESS BEEF, LESS CARBON: AMERICANS SHRINK THEIR DIET-RELATED CARBON FOOTPRINT BY 10 PERCENT BETWEEN 2005 AND 2014

## LESS BEEF = LESS CARBON

BETWEEN **2005 AND 2014**, AMERICANS CUT THEIR BEEF CONSUMPTION, AVOIDING THE EQUIVALENT OF THE ANNUAL TAILPIPE EMISSIONS OF APPROXIMATELY

 **39 MILLION CARS**

Between 2005 and 2014, Americans cut their per-capita diet-related climate-warming pollution by approximately 10 percent. Based on NRDC's calculations, these changes cumulatively avoided approximately 271 million metric tons (MMT) of climate-warming pollution. This was roughly equivalent to the annual pollution of 57 million car tailpipes, with most of these cuts in emissions due to reduced beef consumption.

The most impactful diet adjustments relate to the reduced consumption of specific products. For starters, Americans consumed 19 percent less beef, avoiding an estimated 185 MMT of climate-warming pollution or roughly the equivalent of the annual tailpipe pollution of 39 million cars. Americans' reduced consumption of other products—such as milk, pork, shellfish, and high fructose corn syrup—accounts for the remaining emissions cuts. Pollution could have been cut even deeper had Americans not simultaneously increased consumption of other carbon-intensive foods like cheese, yogurt, butter and other foods.

Despite a drop in consumption, beef still contributes more climate-warming pollution than any other food in the American diet. In fact, it comprised approximately 34 percent of total diet-related per capita climate-warming pollution in 2014, the last year for which data is available.

PRODUCING A KILOGRAM OF BEEF EMITS 26 KILOGRAMS OF CARBON DIOXIDE

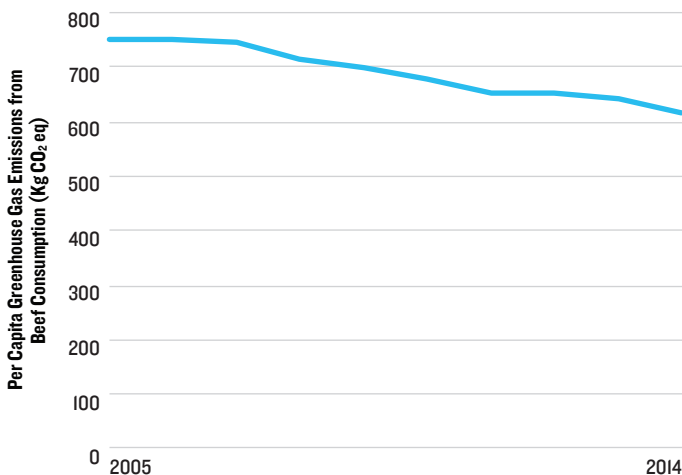


**DIFFERENT FOODS, DIFFERENT IMPACTS**

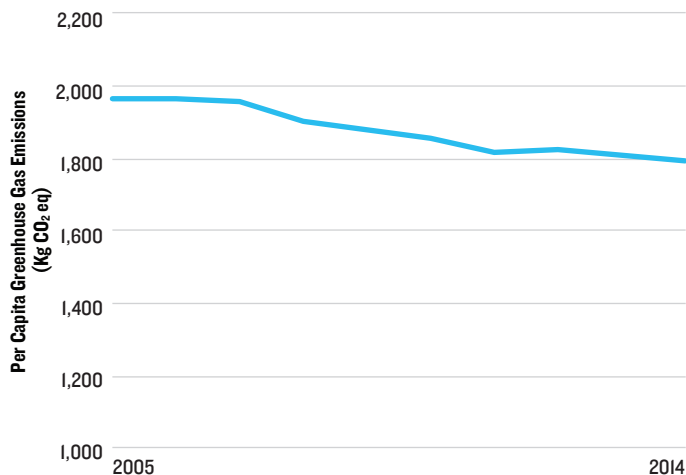
As the threat of climate change looms larger and larger, agricultural global warming pollution is coming under increased scrutiny. Some foods are more greenhouse gas-intensive to produce due to greater inputs of land, fertilizer, and energy. For example, meat and dairy production requires large amounts of animal feed, which is comprised mainly of resource-intensive corn and soy. Through their

digestive processes, ruminant animals, like cows, also emit large volumes of methane, a climate-changing pollutant 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.<sup>1,2,3</sup> Manufacturing and applying synthetic fertilizer, much of which is used to produce feed, and depositing manure on rangelands and pastures also releases nitrous oxide, a climate-warming pollutant 298 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.<sup>4,5</sup>

**FIGURE 1: PER CAPITA GHG EMISSIONS FROM BEEF CONSUMPTION 2005–2014<sup>12</sup>**



**FIGURE 2: PER CAPITA GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM U.S. DIET 2005–2014<sup>15</sup>**



**OUR METHODS**

NRDC calculated the emissions fluctuations associated with changes in per capita consumption of 197 foods tracked by USDA's Economic Research Service from 2005 to 2014.<sup>6,7</sup>

Greenhouse gas emissions factors are based on a compilation of average of lifecycle analysis values identified through a literature meta-analysis published by Heller et al.<sup>8</sup> A life cycle analysis approximates the climate-warming pollution associated with the production of a food item—from fertilizer and pesticides used to grow the crops to transportation and refrigeration. Multiple life cycle analyses for the same food can yield different values if the calculation includes varying growing conditions or different assumptions are made for what to include the measurement. NRDC used life cycle analysis data averaged from the results of multiple life cycle studies, published in the Journal of Industrial Ecology, a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Finally, we used the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) emissions calculator to translate changes in climate-warming pollution due to shifts in food consumption into the equivalent number of passenger vehicles removed from the road over the period in question.<sup>9</sup> See appendix B for additional details on our methodology.

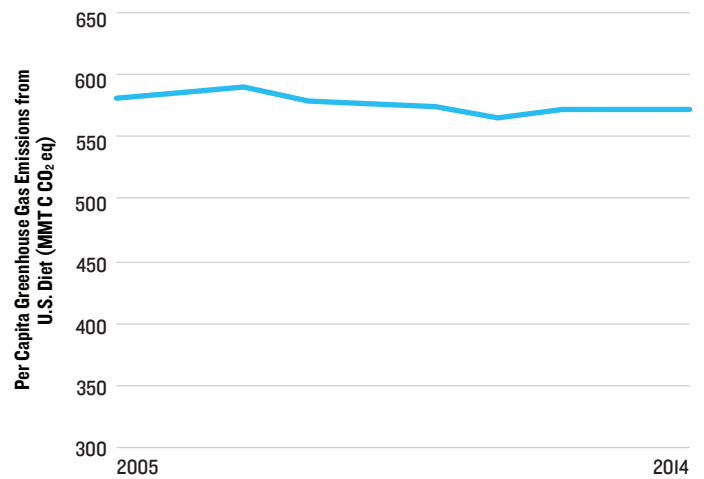
## REDUCING BEEF CONSUMPTION PUT THE BIGGEST DENT IN OUR FOOTPRINT

Producing a kilogram of beef emits 26 kg of carbon dioxide, the highest of all the 197 foods we examined.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Americans generally eat a lot of beef, but reduced beef consumption during this time period. This dietary change resulted in the single biggest contributor to the cumulative total climate-warming pollution reductions between 2005 and 2014, as illustrated in Figure 3. As illustrated in Figure 1, the per capita climate-warming pollution associated with beef consumption dropped by approximately 19 percent between 2005 and 2014, avoiding 185 MMT of climate-warming pollution. That’s the equivalent of the annual tailpipe emissions of approximately 39 million cars.<sup>11</sup> In addition, per capita reduced consumption of orange juice, pork, plain whole milk, and chicken further cut per capita climate-warming pollution—but not by nearly as much as reduced beef consumption. Figure 5 highlights the top 10 foods for which reduced consumption, in turn, reduced climate-warming pollution between 2005 and 2014.

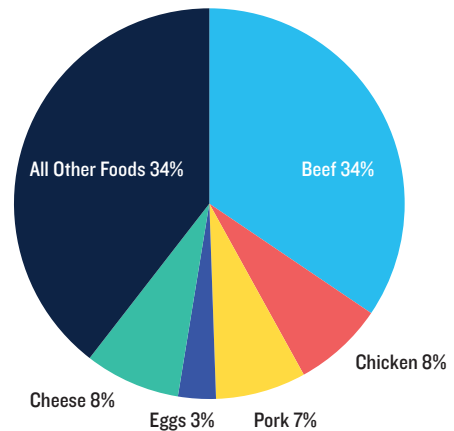
## AMERICANS CONTINUE TO EAT MORE BEEF THAN ALMOST ANY OTHER COUNTRY

Despite reduced beef consumption over the last decade, in 2014, beef was responsible for an outsized 34 percent of the average American’s diet-related climate-warming pollution, as illustrated in Figure 4. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United States was the world’s third largest per capita consumer of beef and veal in 2011, behind just Argentina and Uruguay.<sup>19</sup> As such, eating even less beef offers the biggest opportunity to further reduce food-related pollution.

**FIGURE 3: TOTAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM U.S. DIET 2005–2014<sup>17</sup>**



**FIGURE 4: RELATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TOP 5 GHG-INTENSIVE FOODS AND ALL OTHER FOODS TO TOTAL PER CAPITA FOOD-RELATED GHG EMISSIONS IN 2014<sup>20</sup>**



## THERE’S A BETTER WAY TO MANAGE BEEF PRODUCTION

Changes to beef industry management practices could reduce the lifecycle climate-change pollution impacts of beef. Most beef cattle in the United States today are finished on grain in confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Growing this cattle feed (primarily corn and soy) requires large amounts of pesticides and fertilizers, which, in turn, require significant inputs of fossil fuels. Alternative models of beef production, such as intensive rotational cattle grazing, can help sequester carbon in the soil and provide numerous other health and environmental benefits compared to CAFOs. Better storage and disposal of manure can also reduce methane emissions.





## AMERICANS HAVE REDUCED DIET-RELATED CLIMATE-WARMING POLLUTION

Figure 2 illustrates this decrease in per capita climate-warming pollution. As mentioned earlier, between 2005 and 2014, per capita diet-related climate-warming pollution dropped by approximately 10 percent due to changes in the consumption of the 197 food items examined in this analysis.<sup>13</sup> We estimate that changes in the American diet avoided approximately 271 MMT of climate-warming pollution between 2005 and 2014—roughly equivalent to the pollution put out by 57 million car tailpipes for one year.<sup>14</sup>

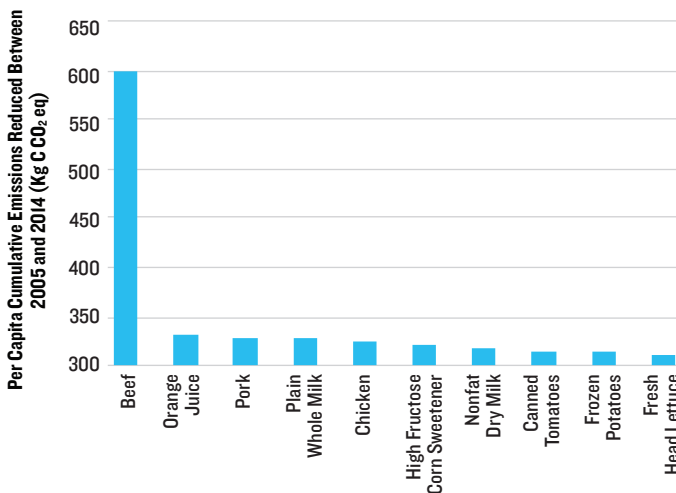
As a result of this per capita reduction in food-related climate-warming pollution, overall U.S. food-related

emissions dropped by approximately 3 percent, despite an 8 percent population growth between 2005 and 2014. Figure 3 illustrates this drop.<sup>16</sup>

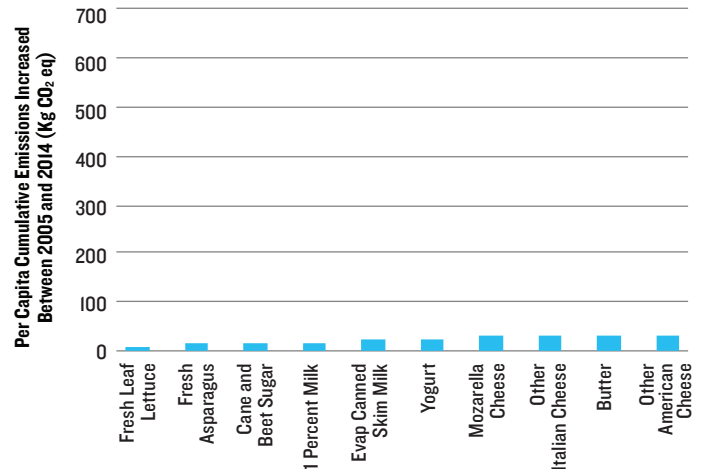
## AMERICANS INCREASED THEIR CONSUMPTION OF OTHER CARBON-INTENSIVE FOODS, PARTICULARLY DAIRY

While we reduced our consumption of beef and other carbon-intensive products, Americans ate significantly more dairy products such as cheese, yogurt, and butter between 2005 and 2014. Dairy products are sourced through the same or similar climate-change pollution-intensive supply chain as beef, resulting in relatively high emissions for these products. Americans also ate significantly more asparagus, a particularly climate-change pollution-intensive vegetable.

**FIGURE 5: TOP 10 FOODS FOR WHICH DROPS IN CONSUMPTION CONTRIBUTED TO GHG REDUCTIONS 2005–2014**



**FIGURE 6: TOP 10 FOODS THAT INCREASED CONTRIBUTIONS OF GHG EMISSIONS 2005–2014<sup>21</sup>**



**TABLE 1: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FACTORS OF TOP 10 FOODS FOR WHICH DROPS IN CONSUMPTION CONTRIBUTED TO GHG REDUCTIONS 2005–2014<sup>18</sup>**

Food	Emissions Factor (kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq/kg)
Beef	26.45
Orange Juice	1.03
Pork	6.87
Plain Whole Milk	1.34
Chicken	5.05
High-Fructose Corn Syrup	0.96
Nonfat Dry Milk	10.40
Canned Tomatoes	1.10
Frozen Potatoes	1.44
Fresh Head Lettuce	1.08

**TABLE 2: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FACTORS OF TOP 10 FOODS THAT CONTRIBUTED MORE GHG EMISSIONS 2005–2014<sup>22</sup>**

Food	Emissions Factor (kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq/kg)
Other American Cheese	9.78
Butter	11.92
Mozzarella Cheese	9.78
Other Italian Cheese	9.78
Yogurt	2.02
Evaporated Canned Skim Milk	3.10
1 Percent Milk	1.34
Cane and Beet Sugar	0.96
Fresh Asparagus	8.87
Fresh Leaf Lettuce	1.08

## APPENDIX A

### FOODS INCLUDED IN ANALYSIS OF PER CAPITA GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION FROM U.S. DIET

1 Percent Milk	Canned Shellfish	Dry Lima Beans	Fresh Cauliflower
2 Percent Milk	Canned Snap Beans	Dry Navy Beans	Fresh Celery
Almonds	Canned Sweet Cherries	Dry Peas and Lentils	Fresh Cherries
Apple Juice	Canned Sweet Corn	Dry Pinto Beans	Fresh Cranberries
Barley Products	Canned Tart Cherries	Dry Red Kidney Beans	Fresh Cucumbers
Beef	Canned Tomatoes	Dry Whole Milk	Fresh Eggplant
Blue Cheese	Canned Tuna	Edible Syrups	Fresh Escarole
Brick Cheese	Cheddar Cheese	Egg Nog	Fresh Garlic
Butter	Chicken	Eggs	Fresh Grapefruit
Buttermilk	Collard Greens	Evap Cond Bulk Whole Milk	Fresh Grapes
Cane and Beet Sugar	Corn Flour and Meal	Evap Cond Skim Milk	Fresh Head Lettuce
Canned Apples	Corn Hominy and Grits	Evap Condensed Canned Whole Milk	Fresh Honeydew
Canned Apricots	Corn Starch	Fresh and Frozen Fish	Fresh Kale
Canned Asparagus	Cranberry Juice	Fresh and Frozen Shellfish	Fresh Kiwi
Canned Cabbage	Cream Cheese	Fresh Apples	Fresh Leaf Lettuce
Canned Carrots	Cured Fish	Fresh Apricots	Fresh Lemons
Canned Chile Peppers	Dehydrated Onions	Fresh Artichokes	Fresh Lima Beans
Canned Cucumbers	Dehydrated Potatoes	Fresh Asparagus	Fresh Limes
Canned Green Peas	Dextrose	Fresh Avocados	Fresh Mangoes
Canned Mushrooms	Dried Apples	Fresh Bananas	Fresh Mushrooms
Canned Olives	Dried Apricots	Fresh Bell Peppers	Fresh Mustard Greens
Canned Peaches	Dried Dates	Fresh Blueberries	Fresh Okra
Canned Pears	Dried Figs	Fresh Broccoli	Fresh Onions
Canned Pineapple	Dried Peaches	Fresh Brussel Sprouts	Fresh Oranges
Canned Plums	Dried Plums	Fresh Cabbage	Fresh Papaya
Canned Potatoes	Dry Black Beans	Fresh Cantaloupe	Fresh Peaches
Canned Salmon	Dry Buttermilk	Fresh Carrots	Fresh Pears
Canned Sardines	Dry Great Northern Beans		Fresh Pineapple

<sup>a</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, *Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data*, [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) (accessed September 29, 2016).

Fresh Plums	Frozen Green Peas	Light Cream	Pecans
Fresh Potatoes	Frozen Lima Beans	Lime Juice	Pineapple Juice
Fresh Pumpkin	Frozen Other Berries	Low fat Cottage Cheese	Pistachios
Fresh Radishes	Frozen Peaches	low fat Flavored Milk	Plain Whole Milk
Fresh Raspberries	Frozen Plums	Macadamia	Pork
Fresh Snap Beans	Frozen Potatoes	Miscellaneous. Frozen	Provolone Cheese
Fresh Spinach	Frozen Raspberries	Vegetables	Prune Juice
Fresh Squash	Frozen Snap Beans	Mozzarella Cheese	Raisins
Fresh Strawberries	Frozen Spinach	Muenster Cheese	Regular Cottage Cheese
Fresh Sweet Corn	Frozen Strawberries	Nonfat Dry Milk	Ricotta Cheese
Fresh Sweet Potatoes	Frozen Sweet Cherries	Oat Products	Romano Cheese
Fresh Tangerines	Frozen Sweet Corn	Orange Juice	Rye Flour
Fresh Tomatoes	Frozen Tart Cherries	Other American Cheese	Skim Milk
Fresh Turnip Greens	Glucose	Other Canned Fish	Sour Cream
Fresh Watermelon	Grape Juice	Other Canned Vegetables	Swiss Cheese
Frozen Apples	Grapefruit Juice	Other Dry Beans	Turkey
Frozen Apricots	Hazelnuts	Other Frozen	Veal
Frozen Asparagus	High Fructose Corn Syrup	Other Italian Cheese	Walnuts
Frozen Blackberries	Honey	Other Miscellaneous Cheese	White and Whole Wheat
Frozen Blueberries	Ice Cream	Other Processed Vegetables	Flour
Frozen Broccoli	Ice Milk	Other Tree Nuts	Whole Flavored Milk
Frozen Carrots	Lamb	Parmesan Cheese	Yogurt
Frozen Cauliflower	Lemon Juice	Peanuts	

## APPENDIX B

### METHODOLOGY NOTES

The USDA's Food Availability data set includes estimates of the amount of food produced for domestic consumption (i.e., food availability) for more than 200 basic commodities at the farm or in early stages of processing. Ingredients in highly processed foods are included as their primary components—for example, as flour, sugar and beef.

This data set is the federal government's best assessment of our diet, although imperfect. It is important to note, for instance, that this data set does not include *all* food commodities ingested by all Americans. It does include major food items that USDA has been able to secure data for, and has been considered sufficiently comprehensive by USDA to use in assessments of whether Americans are adhering to federal dietary pattern recommendations, and in other analyses of U.S. consumption patterns. Other papers have examined additional potential limitations of the data set.<sup>b</sup>

We used values listed in the 'retail weight' category for red meat and poultry, and the primary weight at farm gate of all other food commodities as a proxy for consumption. Of

the commodities that USDA tracked, we included only foods for which data over the period 2005-2014 existed in order to avoid skewing year-to-year comparisons in consumption and GHG emissions. Appendix A includes a list of these foods.

It is important to underscore that these life cycle assessments are estimates and can have a significant range due to differences in geography assumptions, inputs and available data. The average life cycle analyses compiled by *Heller et al* also include life cycle analyses from production outside the United States, and do not specifically represent domestic production systems. They do, however, align with similar estimates made by other researchers. The GHG emissions factor for beef calculated by the Environmental Working Group in a separate life cycle analysis at farm gate, for instance, was 20.44 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq/kg, compared to the average factor of 26.45 kg CO<sub>2</sub>/kg derived by Heller.<sup>c</sup> For a complete list of the range of emissions factors identified in this review and the averages used in this analysis, please refer to *Heller et al*.

<sup>b</sup> Fehrenbach KS, Righter AC, Santo RE, A critical examination of the available data sources for estimating meat and protein consumption in the USA, *Public Health Nutrition* (2016) 19(8): 1358-1367.

<sup>c</sup> Hamerschlag, K., and Venkat, K., "Meat Eater's Guide to Climate Change and Health," *Lifecycle Assessments: Methodology & Results*, 2011.

## SAMPLE CALCULATIONS

### A. Per Capita Emissions for a Food Item in One Year — example Beef

Per Capita Consumption of Beef in 2005 (lbs/year) –  
62.5 lbs/year

Per Capita Consumption of Beef in 2005 (kg/year) –  
62.5 lbs/year \* 0.45 kg/lb = 28.35 kg

Per Capita Emissions due to consumption of Beef in  
2005 (kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq) - 28.35 kg \* 26.45 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq/kg =  
749.84 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq

For this analysis, we performed the same calculation for all  
foods in one year to determine the total food-related per  
capita emissions for one year.

### B. Average Percent Reduction in all per capita food-related emissions each year between 2005 and 2014

Year	Overall Annual Food-Related Per Capita Emissions	Percentage Difference (year-to-year % change)
2005	1,932	
2006	1,933	0.06
2007	1,926	-0.3
2008	1,871	-2.9
2009	1,849	-1.2
2010	1,826	-1.2
2011	1,784	-2.3
2012	1,795	-0.61
2013	1,781	0.73
2014	1,762	-1.1
Average Percentage Change Per Year		-1.0

### C. Overall percentage change in per capita and overall emissions from U.S. diet

We used the trendline equation,  $y = -21.64x + 1994.90$ , from the per capita emissions graph (Figure 1) to calculate the starting per capita emissions in 2005 and the ending per capita emissions in 2014. When  $X=1$ ;  $y=1973.27$  and when  $X=10$ ;  $y=1777.92$ . The percentage difference between these two values is approximately 10 percent. Similarly, we used the trendline equation  $y = -1.9x + 588.09$  from Figure 2 to calculate the starting overall emissions in 2005 and the ending per capita emissions in 2014. When  $x=1$ ;  $y=586.19$  and when  $X=10$ ;  $y=569.09$ . The percentage difference between these two values is approximately 3 percent.

### D. Percentage of Beef's Contribution to overall emissions in 2014

Food	Per Capita Emissions in 2014 (kg CO <sub>2</sub> eq)
Beef	618
Chicken	134
Pork	134
Eggs	56
Mozzarella Cheese	49
Other Italian Cheese	49
Cheddar Cheese	43
Total Wheat Flour	35
2 Percent Milk	34
Canned Tomatoes	33
All Other Foods	593

Percentage Calculation: Per Capita Beef Emissions in 2014/  
Total Per Capita Emissions in 2014 \*100%

$$= 618 \text{ kg CO}_2 \text{ eq} / 1778 \text{ kg CO}_2 \text{ eq} * 100\%$$

$$= 34\%$$

### E. Total Cumulative Emissions Avoided Between 2005 and 2014 due to Change in Consumption—example Beef

To calculate the cumulative GHG emissions change between 2005 and 2014 due to the change in food availability each year, we calculated the difference in per capita emissions for each food, between each year from 2006 to 2014 and the year 2005. We then multiplied the difference in per capita GHG emissions between each of those years and 2005 by the population of that year to determine the overall GHG emissions gained or avoided in that year. We totaled all these changes in per capita GHG emissions to determine the total emissions avoided or gained over the ten year period.

In the example shown, calculations estimate the cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that were avoided from declining consumption of beef over the period 2005 to 2014, relative to a 2005 baseline, by estimating the difference between observed patterns and what emissions would have been if 2005 consumption levels had remained constant.

Per Capita Emissions from Beef in 2005: 750 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq

Per Capita Emissions from Beef in 2006: 753 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq

Difference in Per Capita Emissions from beef between  
2005 and 2006: -3 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq

Total Avoided Emissions due to change in per capita consumption of beef between 2006 and 2005:

$$-3 \text{ kg CO}_2 \text{ eq} * 294,914,085 \text{ (2005 U.S. population)} = 884 \text{ million kg CO}_2 \text{ eq}$$

Performed same calculation for beef, comparing 2007 per capita consumption to 2005; 2008 to 2005; 2009 to 2005; 2010 to 2005; 2011 to 2005; 2012 to 2005; 2013 to 2005; 2014 to 2005

Added all these differences to calculate the total cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided by a change in per capita consumption of beef between 2005 and 2014

Performed same calculations for all food items to determine the top 10 foods that contributed avoided emissions during this period and the top 10 foods that contributed added emissions due to change in their consumption during this period.

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Source of Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Agriculture Sector Emissions, downloaded from <http://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/sources/agriculture.html>.
- 2 Pimentel, D. 1997. Livestock production: Energy inputs and the environment. Canadian Society of Animal Science, Proceedings. Canadian Society of Animal Science, Montreal Quebec.
- 3 Manitoba Eco-Network (2016), Climate Change Connection, downloaded from: <http://climatechangeconnection.org/emissions/co2-equivalents>.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Source of Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Agriculture Sector Emissions, downloaded from <http://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/sources/agriculture.html>.
- 6 United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System (2015), downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system.aspx).
- 7 This analysis relies on USDA Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System food waste assumptions at the production, retail and consumer level, embedded in the Loss-Adjusted Food Availability data provided at [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system.aspx). The data series measures the volume of food available for consumption at the farm level or in the early stages of processing. USDA calculates this availability after subtracting uses that fall outside the U.S. food supply such as farm inputs, exports, ending stocks and industrial uses. As such, this data series is a useful proxy for actual food intake. [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/food-availability-documentation.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/food-availability-documentation.aspx).
- 8 Heller MC, Keoleian. Greenhouse gas emission estimates of U.S. dietary choices and food loss. *Journal of Industrial Ecology: Supporting Information* (2014).
- 9 Greenhouse gas emissions auto equivalent calculated using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>, accessed on March 30 2016. Calculator uses the following conversion factor: 1 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq = emissions from 0.0002 passenger vehicle for one year.
- 10 Heller, M.C. and G.A. Keoleian. 2014. Greenhouse gas emission estimates of U.S. dietary choices and food loss. *Journal of Industrial Ecology: Supporting Information*.
- 11 See Methodology, APPENDIX B, section D ‘Converting Per Capita Change to Greenhouse Gas Emissions Gained or Lost – Calculation Breakdown Example of Beef’.
- 12 NRDC analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data, downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) September 29 2016.
- 13 See Methodology ‘Calculating the Per Capita Reduction in Diet-Related Greenhouse Gases between 1970 and 2013’.
- 14 Greenhouse gas emissions auto equivalent calculated using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>, accessed on March 30 2016. Calculator uses the following conversion factor: 1 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq = emissions from 0.0002 passenger vehicle for one year.
- 15 NRDC analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data, downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) September 29 2016.
- 16 Source of U.S. yearly population estimates numbers: US Department of Agriculture, downloaded from Red Meat Food Availability Dataset [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx).
- 17 NRDC analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data, downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) September 29 2016.
- 18 Heller, M.C. and G.A. Keoleian. 2014. Greenhouse gas emission estimates of U.S. dietary choices and food loss. *Journal of Industrial Ecology: Supporting Information*.
- 19 <https://data.oecd.org/agroutput/meat-consumption.htm>.
- 20 NRDC analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data, downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) September 29 2016.
- 21 NRDC analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System, Loss-Adjusted Food Availability Data, downloaded from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx) September 29 2016.
- 22 Heller, M.C. and G.A. Keoleian. 2014. Greenhouse gas emission estimates of U.S. dietary choices and food loss. *Journal of Industrial Ecology: Supporting Information*.