CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD: WHY A CHANGING CLIMATE MATTERS TO YOU



Module 7 Student Handouts

Instructions: It is easiest to print this document **double-sided**, on the short-edge. Print 1 copy for every 2 students in your class.





WEATHER

CLIMATE

Tells you what to wear each day



Tells you what types of clothes to have in your closet



NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information

www.ncei.noaa.gov

Taken from "What's the Difference Between Weather and Climate?" by National Centers for Environmental Information. <u>https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/weather-vs-climate</u>.

ACTIVITY #2: GREENHOUSE GAS EFFECTS - A CAR EXAMPLE



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- Sunshine (solar energy) passes easily through the glass to heat objects in the car's interior -- remember how hot the car seat gets in summer?
- The car's interior absorbs the short-wave energy and heats up. When the seats heat up, they produce long-wave infrared radiation.
- Here's the tricky part: The glass in the car's windows now begins to act as a kind of one-way mirror. Short-wave solar energy continues to enter with no problem but much of the long-wave infrared radiation is blocked and prevented from leaving

On a much larger scale, this is what's happening to the earth:

- Energy from the sun hits the earth's atmosphere as solar radiation. Some of it is bounced back into space by the atmosphere, but most passes through the atmosphere to warm the surface of the earth.
- Once the earth has been warmed by the short-wave solar energy, excess heat is radiated back into the environment as long-wave infrared radiation.
- Some of the gases in earth's atmosphere act like the glass in the car windows. They let in solar energy and block or absorb infrared energy. As a result, the atmosphere gets warmer.

What does pollution have to do with it?

In all, 30 greenhouse gases have been discovered to date, including carbon dioxide (CO2), water vapor, methane and ozone. But lately new gases are being added to the mix: Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). These are the harmful gases produced by cars and factories, and we humans are responsible!

CLIMATE IS WHAT YOU EXPECT, WEATHER IS WHAT YOU GET



There are 1.45 billion Every year, Public transit has the Trees absorb the Deforestation cars in the world. The potential to reduce CO₂ from the releasing more than average driver emits ~ CO₂ emissions by 37 atmosphere and 4.6 metric tons of CO₂ 1.5 billion tons of CO₂ million metric tons release oxygen in per year.⁴ into the atmosphere.³ per year.¹ exchange. (Add 2 CO₂ molecules) (Add 4 CO_2 molecules) (Remove 2 CO_2 molecules) (Remove $4 CO_2$ molecules)

Increasing energy efficiency is extremely effective in cutting CO₂ emissions.²

(Remove 4 CO_2 molecules)

Aviation is responsible for around 5% of global warming and is rising.⁵

(Add 2 CO_2 molecules)

Burning garbage
emits large amounts
of CO₂ and toxic
chemicals into the
atmosphere.⁶

(Add 2 CO_2 molecules)

If the U.S. recycling levels reach 75%, the CO_2 impact would equate to removing 55 million cars from the roads each year.⁷ (*Remove 2 CO₂ molecules*)

ACTIVITY #3: DROUGHT



Image credit: Bob Nichols, 2013. Texas drought affecting corn crops. USDA. Creative Commons CC BY 2.0. Food Span. 8

TWO THERMOMETERS GREENHOUSE EFFECT RECORDING SHEET

Time	Thermometer #1 (outside)	Thermometer #2 (inside vase or jar)
Baseline		
10 mins		
20 mins		
30 mins		
40 mins		
50 mins		
1 hour		

ACTIVITY #4: FOOD SYSTEM GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS





Image Source: Module 5: Our Changing Climate. Foodspan from John Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (2020); Data source: Weber CL, 10 Matthews HS. Food-Miles and the Relative Climate Impacts of Food Choices in the United States. Environ. Sci. Technol. 2008, 42 (10), 3508–3513.

ACTIVITY #4: FOOD WASTE



Methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, is emitted into our atmosphere from the food waste in our landfills.





















Carrot

One, cooked (80g)

Emissions 90 gCO2e

2

6

g

kCal

Water

Fibre

Calories 27

A

CO₂e

0.5





GG







Water

Plastic bottle (500ml)

A

Water

Fibre

Calories

Protein

0

0

0





Biscuit









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- 6. (n.d.) Recycling Facts. *Recycle Across America*. <u>https://www.recycleacrossamerica.org/recycling-facts</u>.
- 7. Downs, A., & Acevedo, R. (2019). How our trash impacts the environment. *Earth Day.* <u>https://www.earthday.org/how-our-trash-impacts-the-environment/</u>.

Climate Food Flashcards can be downloaded here.