

Congressman, professor argue organics promotes sustainable sustainability

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

The World Health Organization's somewhat startling finding this week, that processed meats can be carcinogenic, has suddenly brought national dietary policy into sharp focus. Although the headline is an unsettling one, it is nonetheless altogether timely because of what is going on at this moment at the United States Department of Agriculture.

Right now, the folks at the USDA are deciding what Americans should and should not be eating for the next five years. And at the center of the debate is a very significant policy issue: sustainability.

The USDA's own Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, made up of federally appointed health experts, [recommended](#) an increase in plant-based diets earlier this year based on both nutritional and sustainability concerns.

On the production front we know that a unit of beef protein contributes [150](#) times more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than a unit of soy protein.

But it's not just what's being farmed that impacts us all, it's how products are being farmed. In comparison to conventional farming methods, organic farming produces gains in resource management and allocation. In fact, organic agriculture [captures](#) significantly more carbon than non-organic and industrial-scale farming, which are often much more water and resource intensive.

By avoiding pesticides, herbicides, hormones and genetic engineering, organic farming's health and environmental [benefits](#) are also clear. Organic food is [six times less likely](#) to contain pesticide residues than food produced through conventional farming methods. Additionally, organic food prohibits the use of [GMOs](#), the full environmental and health impacts of which are not fully understood.

**Read full, original post:** [How sustainability should shape the American diet](#)