

Viewpoint: We have a food-waste problem, but cutting meat consumption won't solve it

Most commercial produce is bought and discarded within two days. It can't even be given to food shelters or homeless people without the paperwork costing more than the food. So it gets thrown out People overbuy salad ingredients because they think they should. It is an aspirational purchase. And then it stares at consumers from the special refrigerator bin, judging them, until it is clearly dead and goes into a landfill.

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Restaurants waste a tremendous amount of food and with them essentially closed – few people order a salad and pay a delivery fee – vegetable revenue has plummeted.

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The EAT-Lancet Commission guidelines written last year are not really evidence-based, they are as aspirational as buying salad thinking that will make you lose weight, but they at least got people thinking about how we will feed 10 billion people in 2050. And that led to a lot of calls to action for their causes by people who can fit everything into their causes. We need more government, they said, more court settlements, more warning labels, more subsidies for Food X and higher taxes on Food Y.

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But science already has the answer Drs. Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier [just received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry](#) for their CRISPR-Cas9 breakthrough, and the most important benefit it will have is in food production. We will be able to grow more diverse food locally with less energy, fewer fertilizers, fewer pesticides, and less water – as long as the same activists who insist modern agriculture is ruining the planet start accepting science and stop pretending environmentalism is opposition to progress.

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