

Viewpoint: Evidence does not support 'plant good, animal bad' mantra. Humans are hard-wired to eat meat

While some question whether humans are supposed to eat meat, a University of Melbourne professor in food science and human nutrition says the archaeological record is unequivocal.

"Clear and abundant" evidence exists that hominins, our ancestors, began eating meat about four million years ago, Professor Neil Mann explained during a presentation to the recent Societal Role of Meat Summit in Dublin.

Not only was this necessary to enable early humans to survive the move from jungles to savannah environments, it also led to physiological and biochemical changes, enabling humans to evolve larger brains while expending less energy on digestion.

While our jungle dwelling pre-human ancestors were predominantly plant eaters, this was not an option in the more open savannah grasslands where grasses containing non digestible cellulose was the predominant form of plants.

Professor Mann also explained that meat is the major source of bioavailable iron and zinc in human diets, and meat and fish are the only source of functional B12 in diets.

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Explaining how his own interest in this area developed, Prof Mann said that, "like many nutritionists and dieticians around the world" in the 1980s, he had been trained in the prevailing but "very unscientific and almost Orwellian mantra" of "plant food good, animal food bad" when it came to human nutrition.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)