

Healthy Humans, Healthy World

by Peggy Robinson

In our growing ecological awareness, many people are changing to compact fluorescent light bulbs, driving fuel efficient automobiles, recycling, composting and generally trying to reduce their carbon footprint. Many businesses marketing “green” and/or organic have become popular and profitable. While these choices are helpful, the greatest effect on the health of the planet and the health of our bodies will come through our dietary choices. Today global warming and health care are at the top of our national concerns. Global warming, erosion of top soil, loss of biodiversity, and acidification of our oceans (the destruction of our planet) and disease (the destruction of our bodies) all have the same root cause: the food we are serving ourselves and our children.

The World Health Organization tells us that 60% of the world populations are malnourished. Yet the grains consumed by the 9 billion U.S. livestock could feed 840 million people following a plant-based diet. Ecologist David Pimentel PhD, from Cornell University, tells us:

- Fossil fuel used to produce animal protein is 11 times greater than that used to obtain the same amount of plant-based protein.
- 1 kg of animal protein required 100 times more water to produce than 1 kg of plant protein.
- Our food has traveled at least 1,500 miles before it is consumed (about 4 calories of en-

ergy to transport for every 1 calorie we get from the food).

As we pause to contemplate if our meal is energy efficient, we realize our food production is draining the energy and resources of this country and our planet.

As unsustainable as food production is in this country, an even greater problem exists in food consumption. Our current health care crisis is a reflection of our food choices. American are not sick and debilitated because they do not have access to a physician or the latest in pharmaceuticals. We are sick because we continue to choose processed junk and animal foods that are inexpensive to purchase mainly due to agricultural subsidies.

If Americans realized the real cost of their food without the subsidies, they would naturally reduce their dependence on junk food and animal products. This reduction would occur similar to the way millions of Americans stopped smoking due to the cost of a pack of cigarettes. It is no wonder our bodies malfunction on a steady diet of highly processed foods void of nutrients. By choosing high nutrient-density fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes closest to their most natural form, many Americans will realize their dream of a well-nourished body full of energy, stamina and mental clarity.

We have the power to choose our future.

