

Community Gardens




Everyone comes together to create a garden where each individual will have their own plot, in which they will be responsible for the garden plot or bed, and the production will be theirs. Additionally, it can be done collectively, where everyone contributes to an entirely shared space, and the harvest is shared by all.


How is a community garden very helpful?



Helping to fight food injustice




All this is the solution to climate change, and it is done together.



Being healthy by eating fresh nutrition and actively taking care of the garden makes you stronger.



Make cities greener to clean the air. Planting and composting help reduce the carbon footprint.



Meeting new people and talking about gardening will make you happy and more social.



Support the local economy

Food Justice

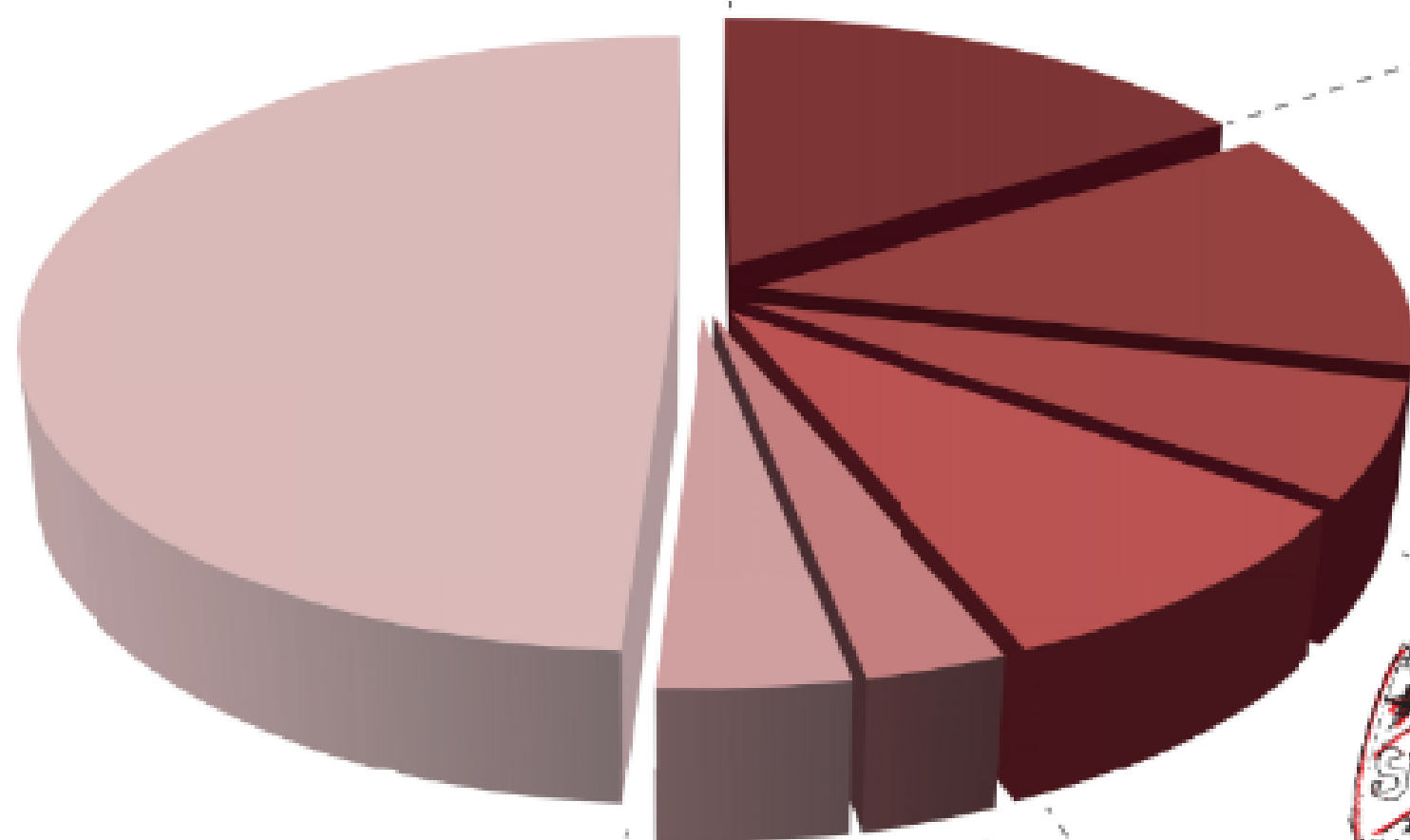
Think about the food you ate last time. It came from a plant or crop that farmers have worked hard to grow. Now think about the land where it came from; it may have come from far away, where airplanes have added more CO₂ to the atmosphere. This harms the environment when transporting all the food, and this is still ongoing because about 50% of the GHG emissions come from the global food system.

GRAIN is a small international non-profit organization that helps support small farmers and social movements. They have found the result of the industrial food system affecting our planet.

How the industrial food system contributes to the climate crisis

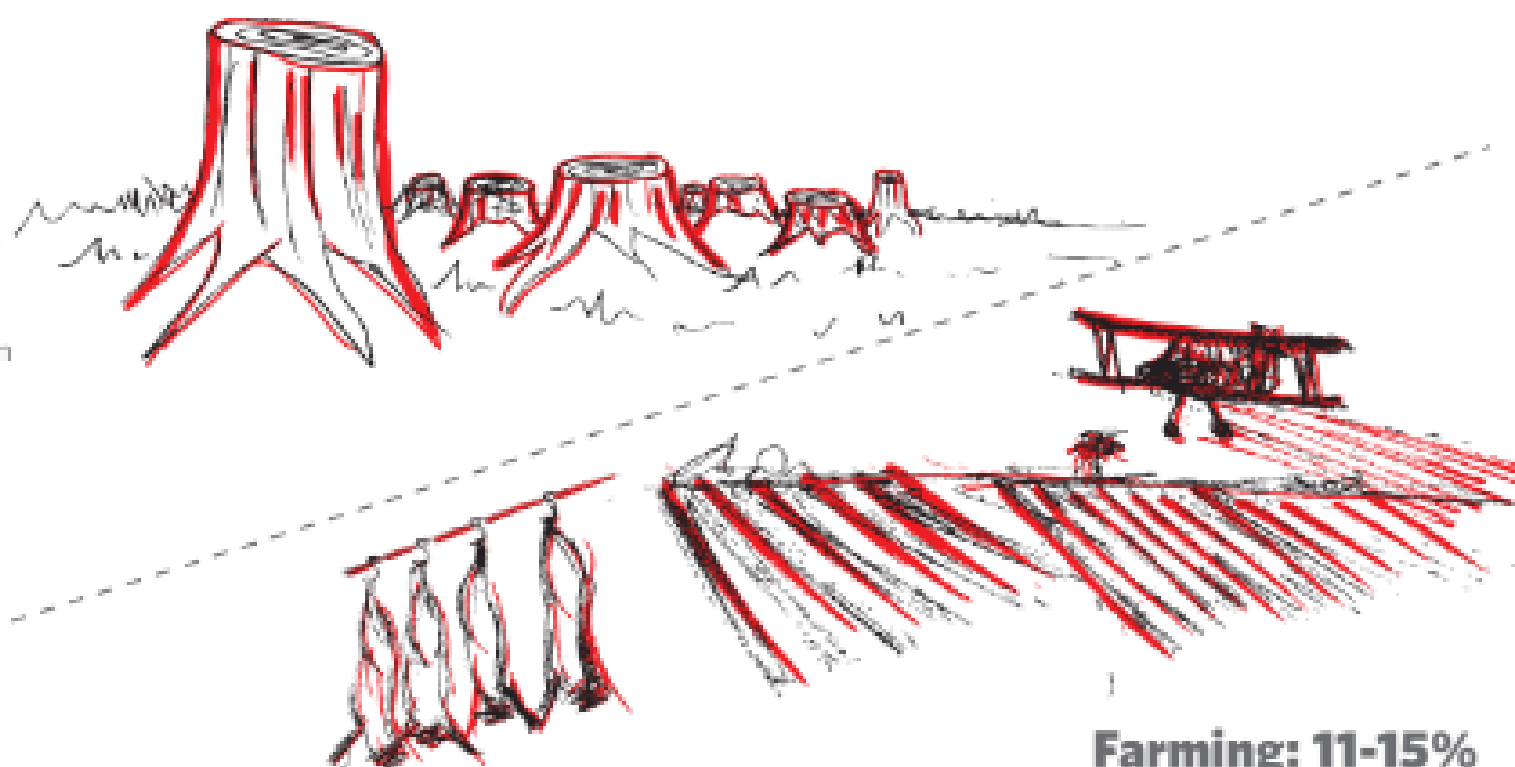
Between 44% and 57% of all GHG emissions come from the global food system

Other-non food related emissions: 43-56%



Deforestation: 15-18%

Before the planting starts, the bulldozers do their job. Worldwide, industrial agriculture is pushing into savannas, wetlands and forests, ploughing under huge amounts of land. The FAO says the expansion of the agricultural frontier accounts for 70-90% of global deforestation, at least half of that for the production of a few agricultural commodities for export. Agriculture's contribution to deforestation thus accounts for 15-18% of global GHG emissions.



Farming: 11-15%

It is generally acknowledged that farming itself contributes 11-15% of all greenhouse gasses produced globally. Most of these emissions result from the use of industrial inputs, such as chemical fertilisers and petrol to run tractors and irrigation machinery, as well as the excess manure generated by intensive livestock keeping.

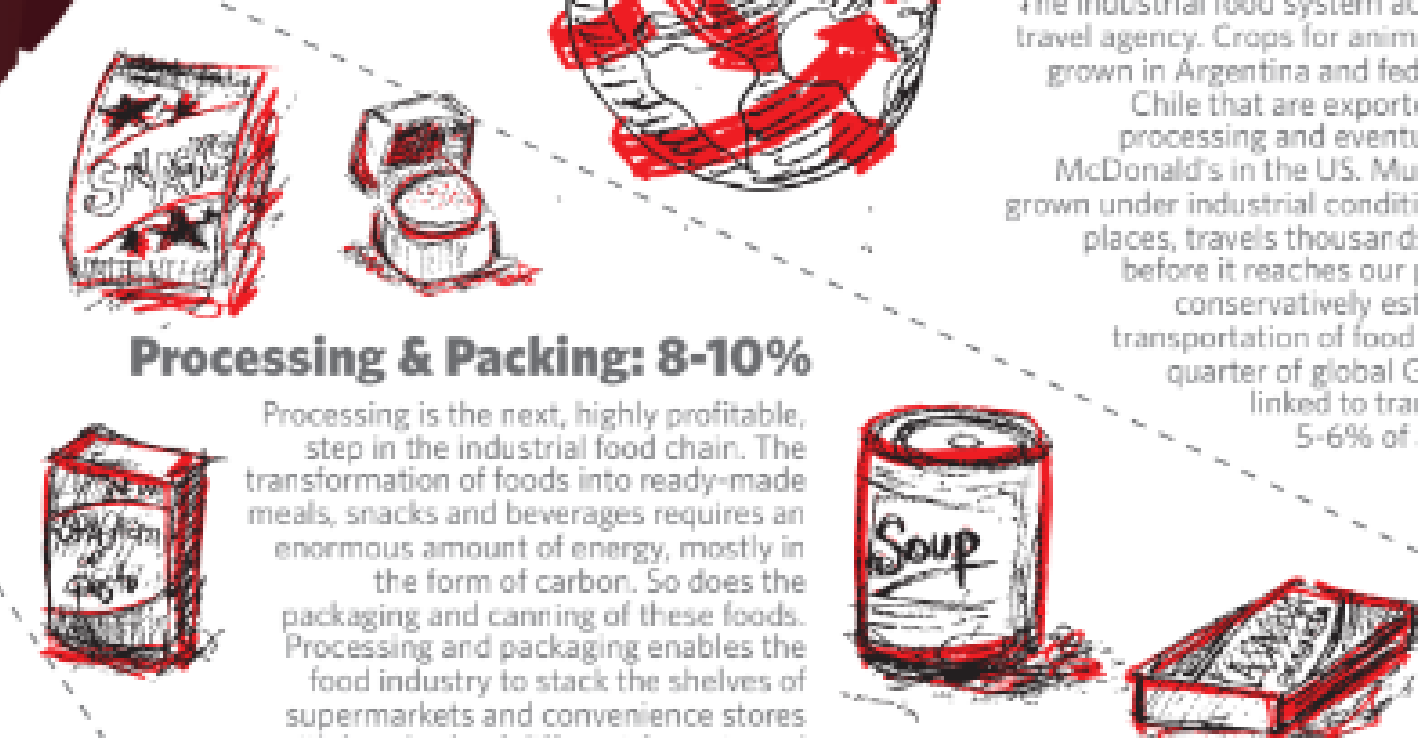
Transport: 5-6%

The industrial food system acts like a global travel agency. Crops for animal feed may be grown in Argentina and fed to chickens in Chile that are exported to China for processing and eventually eaten in a McDonald's in the US. Much of our food, grown under industrial conditions in faraway places, travels thousands of kilometres before it reaches our plates. We can conservatively estimate that the transportation of food accounts for a quarter of global GHG emissions linked to transportation, or 5-6% of all global GHG emissions.



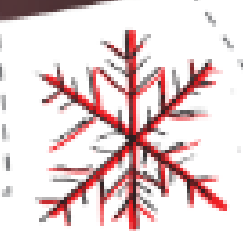
Processing & Packing: 8-10%

Processing is the next, highly profitable, step in the industrial food chain. The transformation of foods into ready-made meals, snacks and beverages requires an enormous amount of energy, mostly in the form of carbon. So does the packaging and canning of these foods. Processing and packaging enables the food industry to stack the shelves of supermarkets and convenience stores with hundreds of different formats and brands, but it also generates a huge amount of greenhouse gas emissions - some 8 to 10% of the global total.



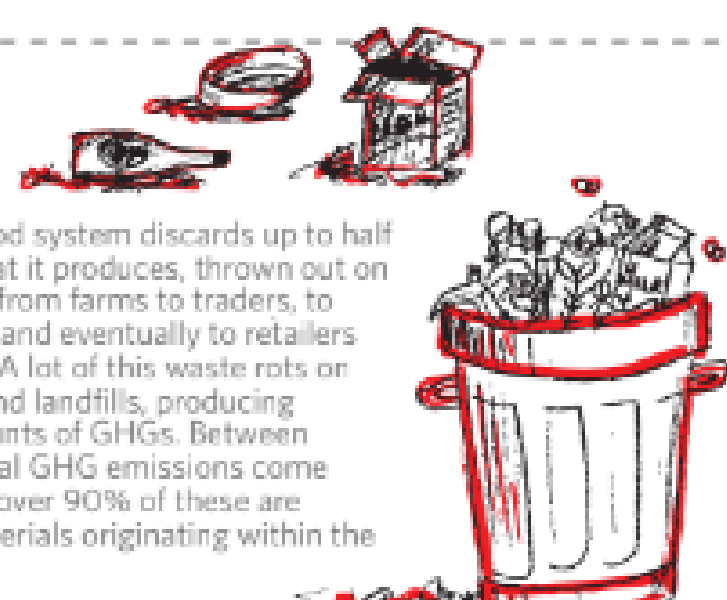
Freezing & Retail: 2-4%

Refrigeration is the lynchpin of the modern supermarket and fast food chains' vast global procurement systems. Wherever the industrial food system goes, so do cold chains. Considering that cooling is responsible for 15 percent of all electricity consumption worldwide, and that leaks of chemical refrigerants are a major source of GHGs, we can safely say that the refrigeration of foods accounts for some 1-2% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. The retailing of foods accounts for another 1-2%.



Waste: 3-4%

The industrial food system discards up to half of all the food that it produces, thrown out on the long journey from farms to traders, to food processors, and eventually to retailers and restaurants. A lot of this waste rots on garbage heaps and landfills, producing substantial amounts of GHGs. Between 3.5-4.5% of global GHG emissions come from waste, and over 90% of these are produced by materials originating within the food system.



The central injustice of food is the farmers' rights and values, including the difference of our race and culture.

The story of food injustice from the beginning:

From the 1490s, indigenous peoples' farmland was taken away.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 removed many indigenous peoples from their land.

The Homestead Act of 1862 caused indigenous people to cheaply give away their land to white settlers.



Today, the effect of food injustice on Indigenous Communities is their struggles to get their land back or not having enough land. They need land to get the food they are used to eating, and the United Nations research has shown that Indigenous people save 80% of the world's biological diversity.

From 1776 to 1865, African Americans worked as slaves, improving the business of the United States.

In 1865, African Americans were given shared land for sharecropping, used to pay off their debts and make a living.

Since then, people have been treated terribly and have no rights over farmland or nutritious food, which has had many harmful effects on the black communities.



Definitions:

Food Justice: The food system that looks at the health benefits of the human eating the food and views all the rights humans need.

Food Sovereignty: Rights and power over the production, distribution, and consumption of the people who produce the food.

Community garden: People in the neighborhood or an arranged group get together in a garden, having shared jobs and have access to their production.

Sustainability: To keep the effect of any job or object healthy and safe for the environment.

Green revolution: Third agriculture revolution, where technology transfers to increase the yield of crops and agricultural production to solve world hunger.

Carbon Footprint: The total amount of greenhouse gasses generated by our actions.

Greenhouse Gas: All the waste gasses trapped inside the earth's atmosphere that can collect heat from sunlight and increase the global temperature.

Food waste: Food being wasted releases methane gas and adds to the greenhouse gasses.

Action Steps

Organize or join a community garden:

You can use the American Community Gardening Association's interactive map to find one area for your garden.

You can use Kofi Thomas's story of the Good Life Garden to create your own.

Support local farmers, supermarkets, and other food organizations to stand for Food Justice Certification through the Agricultural Justice Project:

This brings attention to food justice and the rights of the farmers.

Share and save seeds to preserve biodiversity

Seed banks can do this, and libraries; this help keep soil healthy and nutritious.

Educate yourself on the intersection between race and food

Read about the past and how it's harming our community.



Nyeléni



Nyeléni was a courageous and great leader who spoke up for Food Sovereignty, and how every farmer deserves rights over the land they work for, and they deserve better food needed for their body to survive. Nyéléni's action had made a difference that has put a start to stand against food injustice.

In 2007, there was the first forum for food sovereignty in Sélingué, Mali (West Africa). About 500 delegates from more than 80 countries adopted the “Declaration of Nyéléni,” and it was nicely mentioned that:

- “Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations” (Nyéléni 2007).

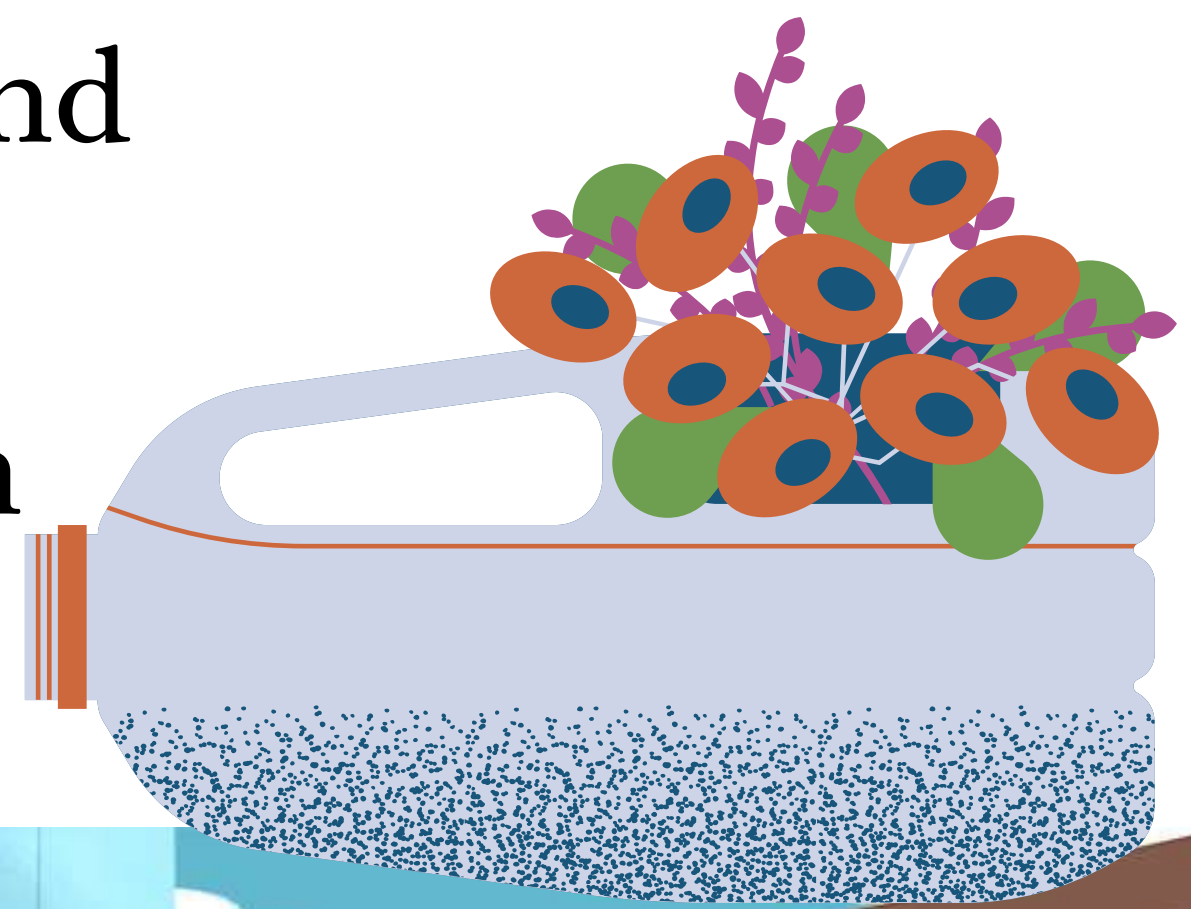


Sustainable Cities



Recycling harms the environment, adding more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. So it is always better to reduce the use of plastic.

Upcycle: be creative and artistic, and reuse the things you don't need anymore instead of throwing them away and taking up landscapes.



Urban land with many green plants and happy people breathing fresh and clean air. Additionally, the community becomes stronger as they become more friendly.

Resources:

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In our Climate Action Collective, we had a field trip to a community garden in New Jersey. This community garden was in the **Weasel Brook Park in Clifton**. Carmen Rosario, a Community Garden Coordinator, gave us the garden tour and explained how the community finds peace through this. From her, we learned and explored community gardens and saw the fantastic impacts on our societies.

