

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD DISCUSSION GUIDE

All the Climate Change and Food tools mentioned in this document are available at: climatechicago.fieldmuseum.org/learn.



Find this and other climate action tools at climatechicago.fieldmuseum.org



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GUIDE TO A CLIMATE-FRIENDLY DIET

This two-page document explains how our food system contributes to climate change, offers ways we can reduce our diet's negative impact on the environment, highlights local climate-friendly food traditions, and provides links to local resources (climatechicago.fieldmuseum.org/learn).

THREE VIDEOS:

Food Culture (1 minute)

This video on the cultural and environmental significance of Chicago residents' food traditions invites the viewer to reflect on how their own food choices affect the planet. It was created for The Field Museum's Restoring Earth exhibit (restoringearth.fieldmuseum.org/).

Telling Our Stories: Creating Green Communities (11 minutes)

Master Storytellers from In the Spirit perform stories of climate-friendly activities in Chicago, many related to food and agriculture (<http://vimeo.com/35764542>).

Vegan Soul (6 minutes)

Chef Tsadakeeyah discusses the rich food heritage of Chicago's African-American community and the expanding role of food and gardens in the community today (<http://vimeo.com/35585628>).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Here are some discussion questions to explore connections between food, culture, and climate in a group setting. They should lead to interesting conversations on your personal, family, and community food lifestyles and how they relate to the environment and climate action.

Choose any or all of the questions below (in no particular order):

1. Describe the traditional meal at your family's favorite or most important holiday. What are the key ingredients?

Why are they important?

2. What's your favorite spice? Where do you get it? Is it something you could grow or make?
3. What kind of foods do you grow? What would you like to grow? What obstacles if any are there to growing these foods?
4. Where do you get your recipes?
5. Where do you shop for food? What do you buy on a regular basis? What kind of information is available where you shop on how and where the food is made?
6. What does "organic" mean to you?
7. Ask each person to answer one of these questions:
 - a. What are the last three things you ate or drank?
 - b. As a cook, what's your specialty?
 - c. What's your go-to dinner when you don't have a lot of time?

Then discuss: What are two ways to make that meal/food/drink more climate-friendly?

8. The motto of George Washington Carver F.A.R.M.S. is "There is no culture without agriculture." What do you think this means? Do you agree? Why or why not?
9. Chef Tsadakeeyah is working to integrate experiences with nature and food into kids' early education and play spaces. What is your earliest memory of food? What is the first dish you learned to make? What have you taught (or will you teach) your children to cook?

WRAP-UP:

There are many groups in Illinois working on issues such as food access, school lunches, hunger, food system sustainability, community gardens, and urban agriculture. Conclude with a short discussion about organizations in your community that are working on issues related to food. What are they working on? How does their work relate to climate change or the environment? How can people get involved?