

Beef + Lamb New Zealand: EAT-Lancet Report FAQs

How are we addressing climate change?

- New Zealand's sheep and beef farmers take the challenge of climate change seriously. They've already cut their greenhouse gas emissions from livestock by 30 percent since 1990 while maintaining similar levels of production and doubling the values of their exports.
- We've also set ourselves the goal of being a carbon neutral sheep and beef sector by 2050.
- A recent report from the University of Canterbury showed there is 2.8 million hectares of native vegetation and 1.4 million hectares of native forest on sheep and beef farms, and when combined with some 180,000 hectares of plantation forestry, there's significant carbon sequestration taking place on farm, which B+LNZ is currently undertaking research to better understand, as we believe it may be offsetting at least half of our remaining emissions.
- We're also working with farmers and the government to look at opportunities around the One Billion Trees programme.

How are we addressing loss in biodiversity?

- While New Zealand has historically experienced a loss in biodiversity, in part because of land clearances for farming from the 1800s through to the 1950s, since the 1980s sheep and beef farmers have been playing an increasing role in supporting biodiversity.
- There is some 2.8 million hectares of native vegetation on sheep and beef farms, including 1.4 million hectares of native forest – the largest collection of native vegetation outside of the public conservation estate and representing nearly a quarter of all of New Zealand's native vegetation.
- As part of our environment strategy, Beef + Lamb New Zealand is actively working to find more ways to continue to build on this valuable on-farm biodiversity.

How much red meat are Kiwis currently eating?

Based on working estimates, New Zealanders currently eat (carcase weight equivalent) about: 17.2kg beef, 5kg lamb and 0.7kg mutton per capita. In addition, 23.9kg pork and 47.8kg chicken per capita (2017-18 BLNZ Ltd Economic Service) resulting in a total red meat intake 46.8kg (beef + lamb/mutton + pork)

- In the last 10 years to 2017-18, per capita figures have changed:
 - Beef down 38%
 - Lamb down 45%
 - Mutton down 72%
 - Overall reduction of beef/lamb/mutton = 42%
 - Pork up 15%
 - Poultry up 40%
 - Overall reduction all meats = 0%

The Nutritional Benefits of Red Meat

It's important to remember that NZ grass-fed beef and lamb is naturally produced and packed full of essential nutrients including quality protein, vitamins and minerals including iron, zinc, and vitamin B12 and naturally low in sodium and low in fat when trimmed, contributing to the health and wellbeing of all New Zealanders from conception to positive aging. The place of red meat in a healthy diet is well recognised in national and global dietary guidelines.

Keeping in mind the rich source of an array of nutrients found in red meat, when we cast a spotlight on the nutritional status of our population, it becomes clear where vulnerable populations are more at risk if red meat is significantly reduced from the diets of adults:

- 3.4% of men and 15.5% of women aged 71 years and over have an **inadequate protein intake**.
- The estimated prevalence of **inadequate intake for vitamin B12** is 7.9% (males 1.3%; females 14.1%). There is a higher prevalence among females aged 19–30 years (22.8%), and females aged 71 years and over (27.0%)
- The estimated prevalence of **inadequate iron intake** is 9.7% in females and 5.6% in males. Females aged 15–18 years have an inadequate intake of 34.2%; those aged 31–50 years, 15.4%.
- The estimated prevalence of **inadequate intake of zinc** is 39.1% in males and 11.2% in females. The highest prevalence is among males aged 71 years and over at 89.7%.

And in the diets of our children:

- 6.6% of children have an **inadequate iron intake**.
 - This is highest among females including those menstruating at 12%.
- 8 out of 10 toddlers **don't meet the recommended daily intake of dietary iron**.
- 14% of children under the age of 2 are **iron deficient**.
- 7.3% of children **don't meet an adequate zinc intake**.

University of Otago and Ministry of Health. 2011. A Focus on Nutrition: Key Findings of the 2008-9 New Zealand Adult Nutrition Survey. Wellington: Ministry of Health

Ministry of Health. 2003. NZ Food NZ Children: Key results of the 2002 National Children's Nutrition Survey. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

Wall, CR et al. 2008. Ethnic variance in iron status: is it related to dietary intake? Public Health Nutr 12 (9):1413-1421.

Grant, CC et al. 2007. Population prevalence and risk factors for iron deficiency in Auckland, New Zealand. J Paediatr Child Health 43: 532-538.

What implications does this report have for the New Zealand sheep and beef sector? Does our sector have a future?

Our industry is embracing the plant-based movement as EAT-Lancet suggests, because it doesn't eliminate meat from diets, rather it emphasises the importance of sustainably raised red meat that New Zealand is proud to produce, and can further demand a premium for from eco-conscious consumers. Our farmers are also adapting, with sheep and beef farms being a mosaic of operations, from cropping, sheep and beef cattle, and forestry.

We expect that work will continue to consider how we can feed the growing world population in a sustainable way and there will be increased interest in alternative proteins.

We see room for both New Zealand red meat and alternative protein as demand for protein is expected to double by 2050. We can't and don't want to feed the world.

At the same time, we are seeing growing demand for sustainability produced red meat which is what we produce. We call these consumers "conscious foodies", who are willing to pay a premium for this kind of food and we see reports like this one by the EAT-Lancet Commission as an opportunity to differentiate New Zealand red meat internationally.

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