

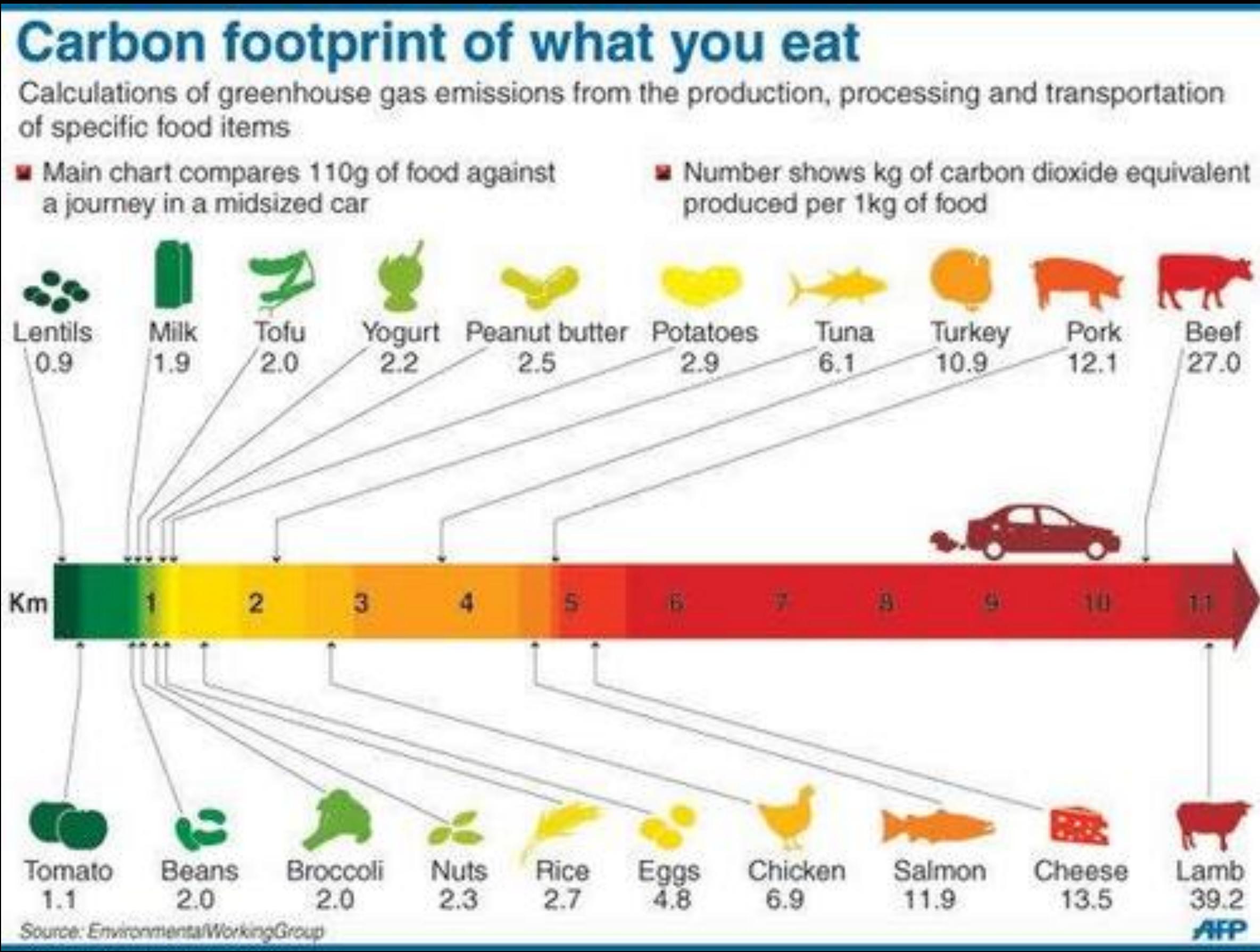
# An Examination of Beef Consumption Attitudes Among Adults in the United States

Juan Avila

Economics and Business Department of Kalamazoo College; Advised by Dr. Ahmed Hussen

## ABSTRACT

This senior project was created to investigate the concerns that the United States has when it comes to consuming beef and its willingness to adapt habits and policies aimed at reducing beef consumption. Questions regarding substitution of beef with other options and policies aimed at reducing beef consumption were posed to gauge consumer attitudes. In addition, demographic information such as age, gender, education level, income level, and state of residence, was recorded to investigate if there are any patterns among different groups.



## INTRODUCTION

When it comes to research on United States population growth, it is observed that the population is expected to increase, reaching a population of 400 million people by 2051. As a result, the consumption of different food products is also expected to increase. Among different food groups, beef products have the largest environmental burden, contributing to extensive amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, it has been researched that the growing demand of meat products is unsustainable. It therefore becomes essential to investigate alternative ways to reduce beef consumption in order to mitigate detrimental effects to the environment.

## RESULTS

### Survey Findings:

- Comparison between males and females showed that males were more reluctant to decrease their beef consumption, which supports past studies demonstrating greater beef consumption among males
- No difference between males and females when it comes to beef-related health concerns
- Difference between males and females in the concern for environmental impact and animal welfare related to beef consumption
- Rise in beef consumption can be attributed to multiple demographic factors
- Meat analogues may have a key role in the mitigation of beef consumption and its related environmental degradation

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A survey was created on Google Forms and distributed on Facebook, a social media platform, and LinkedIn, a professional networking site. Subjects were asked to voluntarily participate, which resulted in a total of 127 survey responses. Only 124 of the recorded responses were used in this research; the other 3 responses were not used due to the fact that the subjects did not reside in the United States.



## CONCLUSIONS

As climate change continues to be a global problem, studies show that it cannot be reversed within the next hundred years. As a consequence, it is imperative to begin taking action as soon as possible and one of the ways to do that is through our food choices. Some of the ways of doing this are through substitution of food products that have large carbon and water footprints with eco-friendlier alternatives or implementing policies aimed at reducing consumption of such products.

Since beef production is a large contributor of greenhouse emissions, it is important to address beef production either by making it more sustainable or by moving to production of other alternative foods. An important part of reducing environmental damage derived from beef production is researching the demographics and patterns of those who consume the most beef; thus, these investigations will allow us to focus on target audiences and a better understanding on beef consumption behavior.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to Dr. Ahmed Hussen for his guidance and support during the research and writing process. It was through his Environmental and Resource Economics course that my interest in environmental economics began. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr. Hannah Apps for her encouragement and support in the initial steps of creating my SIP.