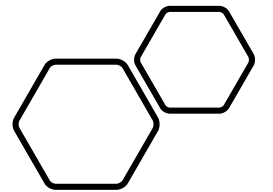




Is the internationally emerging trend for **plant-based** diets good news for Greece?







# The 2 highest Priorities for Humanity & the Planet

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- The quest of humans for wellness, the search of ambrosia, the food of the gods that conferes immortality
  
- The quest of the planet for sustainability

# Major Challenges ahead of us

- Promoting good nutrition, health and sustainable food systems in the context of population growth, dietary transition and a changing climate is a central challenge of our time.
- Whereas climate change has an impact on our diets, our diets also affect climate change.
- Increase in particularly of type II diabetes, coronary heart disease and some cancers because global diets are deteriorating
- Food production and consumption are responsible for 19-29% of all human-induced GHG emissions, up to 70% of water use and more than 60% of terrestrial biodiversity loss
- Current diets, with their high intakes of meat, fat, salt and sugar, pose a major risk to health, social systems and environmental life-support systems
- Shifts to more animal-based diets could raise agriculture and food GHG emissions by as much as 80% by 2050

# The learnings from UN & WHO

It is estimated that alternative balanced or healthier diets such as the Mediterranean, pescetarian or vegetarian could reduce emissions from food production to below those of the projected 2050 income-dependent diet, with potential per capita reductions of 30%, 45% and 55%, respectively.

The diagram consists of two blue circles connected by two large, light blue arrows. The top arrow points from the left circle to the right circle, and the bottom arrow points from the right circle to the left circle, forming a cycle.

Sustainable diets have thus been defined as those with:

- low environmental impacts
- which contribute to food & nutrition security
- that lead present & future generations to a healthy life
- that are protective & respectful of biodiversity & ecosystems,
- culturally acceptable,
- accessible,
- economically fair and affordable,
- while optimizing natural and human resources




# WHO's healthy diet

A healthy diet for adults contains:

- Fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole grains.
- At least 400 g (5 portions) of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Less than 10% of total energy intake from free sugars & processed foods
- Less than 30% of total energy intake from fats. Unsaturated fats are preferable to saturated fats. Industrial trans fats are not part of a healthy diet.
- Less than 5 g of salt per day and use iodized salt.

Comparisons of omnivorous diets to more sustainable alternatives, such as Mediterranean, pescetarian and vegetarian diets, have shown the latter to decrease disease risk globally. Incidence rates of type II diabetes were reduced by 16-41% and of cancer by 7-13%, while relative mortality rates from coronary heart disease were 20-26% lower and overall mortality rates for all causes combined were cut by 0-18%





# The enormous opportunity for Greece

Fact: the Greek Mediterranean diet lies at the epicenter of all Mediterranean diets.

The well-kept secrets of the Greek Mediterranean Diet, that make it the ideal diet in the quest of humanity for wellness and of the planet for sustainability, are:

- the very high consumption of raw and cooked vegetables, pulses – veggie proteins, nuts and fruit. The Greek Mediterranean diet is to a great extent a vegetarian, plant-based diet.
- the very high consumption of plant-based fats, and more specifically extra virgin olive oil (as not all plant-based fats are healthy), also known as the Greek diet paradox.
- The Cretan-Greek Med of the 1960's is the closest you can get to UN's reference diet for a sustainable planet.



# The Greek diet paradox

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- Although 35% of the daily calorie intake is derived from fat, it's the world's healthiest diet
- What's the secret?
- the world's healthiest fat, Extra Virgin Olive Oil.
- then, it is extra virgin olive oil again that makes vegetables, raw or cooked, so tasty, adding flavor and aroma to the most healthy and tasty food combinations.



# Enforced by law in Greece?

- Food-based dietary guidelines are a key means of encouraging healthy, sustainable and climate friendly diets. To date, only a few countries (notably Brazil, Germany, Qatar and Sweden) have included sustainability criteria in their national dietary guidelines (FAO/FCRN 2016). Broadly, the advice issued by these countries focuses on reducing meat consumption, choosing seafood from non-threatened stocks, eating more plants and plant-based products, reducing energy intake and reducing food waste. Sweden and its Nordic neighbors have emphasized the environmental impact of diet in their sustainability criteria. Brazil's guidelines also address the social and economic aspects of sustainability and urge people to avoid ultra-processed foods that damage traditional food cultures and health.
- Should Solon have known, he would have passed legislation on the Greek Mediterranean diet, as he did with the olive tree.





thank you