

# Living Responsibly—Eat Lower on the Food Chain: Make Your Life a Beautiful Prayer

*Therefore strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. —'Abdu'l-Bahá*



Eating lower on the food chain simply means eating more plants than animal products. Why? **First**, it is good for your physical health because of several reasons: Factory-farmed meats contain hormones and antibiotics. In addition, toxic herbicides and pesticides used in the production of fodder for livestock accumulates in their fatty tissues. **Second**, it is ethically the better choice: Most livestock are raised and slaughtered under cruel conditions. **Third**, a more plant-based diet is socially responsible: Livestock production requires much more agricultural land to grow the feed for livestock than it does to grow grains for people. **Fourth**, but in the long-term most vital for

humankind, is the devastating impact that meat production has on the environment. We are talking about chemical pollution, soil erosion and degradation, deforestation, excessive water use, pollution of rivers and the ocean, and, last, but not least, huge quantities of greenhouse gas emissions from livestock that warm our earth and change the climate for centuries, even millennia. Like all other lifestyle changes, including our spiritual development, eating more responsibly happens gradually over time. When 'Abdu'-Bahá was asked about how to better our lives, he is reported to have responded, "*Kam, kam, rúz bih rúz*"— "Little by little, day by day." If you eat meat twice a day, reduce it to once a day. If you eat meat once a day, reduce it to every second day. Most polluting are beef and lamb. Consider changing to organically and humanely raised chicken and turkey. Rice, lentils, and vegetables are delicious. Bon appetit!

Image: Buffalo Chicken & Quinoa Veggie Bowl. Source: [www.thecreativebite.com](http://www.thecreativebite.com)