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*Drop the fork and listen up! New Dream launches **Cater to the Earth** –
An EcoConsumer Campaign that will change how you look at the food you eat.*

Takoma Park, MD – As crazy as it sounds, the Cater to the Earth campaign grew out of a discussion about cows farting. Seriously. New Dream staffers Hanaa Rifaey and Michele Levy were scanning the morning headlines and were struck by a study about the significant environmental threat posed from methane, a greenhouse gas over twenty times more potent than carbon dioxide that enters our atmosphere due to the best efforts of gassy cows.

However, the next logical question – “Why are cows so gassy, anyway?” – prompted them to hit the books. Neither staff member was prepared for where their research would lead. Early on, they discovered that corn – and the formidable American corn lobby – are key players in determining both how we eat and how our food choices affect our planet. Cattle feed is largely comprised of corn, a far cry from their traditional diet of grazing on grass and roughage. And cows (whose biology apparently missed the diet switch memo) simply aren’t able to efficiently digest the corn. The result? Irritated cow stomachs, more gas (hello methane!), and a perfect environment for toxic bacteria that ultimately contaminate groundwater and soil.

And unfortunately, that’s only the tip of the iceberg.

Food and food politics is the new hot topic in American conversation. With gastro-luminaries like Michael Pollan and Mark Bittman tearing up the pages of *The New York Times* and the slow food, organic, and locavore movements becoming increasingly mainstream, it seems like discussions of food are on the tip of everyone’s tongue. But missing from this dialogue is the serious impact of food on two of our most precious resources: our people and our planet.



How is it possible that with all the food currently at our disposal, urban and rural children are still in danger of malnutrition? Why does it cost more to eat fresh produce than frozen, microwave meals, and freeze dried ramen? What does the price of steak have to do with beach erosion in Venezuela? And why is it essential that we curb our insatiable appetite for meat in order to reduce greenhouse gases?

With these questions in mind, the Center for a New American Dream is pleased to announce the launch of the Cater to the Earth campaign, a free resource designed to encourage everyday Americans to join the conversation about the food they eat.

Cater to the Earth aims to make sense of the food-related issues, questions, and catchphrases tossed around by the popular media. The Cater to the Earth site highlights the evolution of our food from a natural product to a scientific commodity; how the planet's appetite for meat is destroying our lands and seas; how hunger and malnutrition work in urban, suburban and rural environments; a dissection of the American diet and its toll on the rest of the world; a discussion of Fair Trade beyond the buzzwords; and an exploration of global food traditions and cultures.

New Dream has partnered with the Center for Food Safety and other organizations working on food issues to provide thorough research on shifting food trends throughout our nation's history and daily insights and updates into the relationships between food, politics, and our environment. Action-oriented readers will find a pledge page where they can sign up to start making change at their own level of ability and commitment. Additionally, New Dream staff members will lead conversations about food culture, taste and tradition, demonstrating how to put some of these tips into practice.

Come join us at <http://www.newdream.org/food> and start your food journey today - our planet and your tastebuds will thank you.

About the Center for a New American Dream

The Center for a New American Dream helps Americans consume responsibly to protect the environment, enhance quality of life, and promote social justice. We work with individuals, institutions, communities, and businesses to conserve natural resources, counter the commercialization of our culture, and promote positive changes in the way goods are produced and consumed. Visit us at www.newdream.org