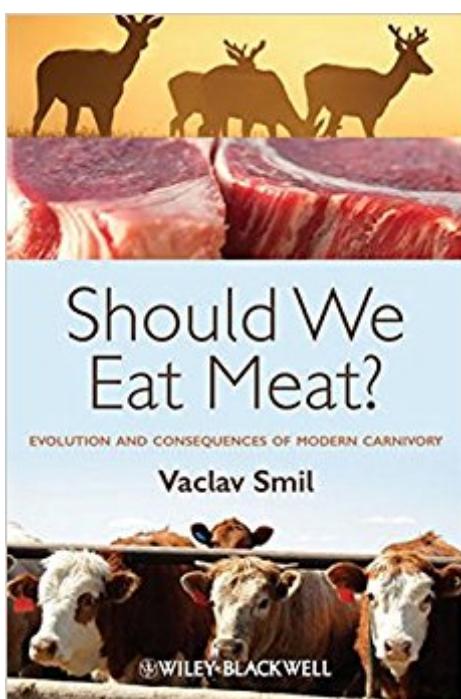


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# Should We Eat Meat? Evolution And Consequences Of Modern Carnivory



## Synopsis

Meat eating is often a contentious subject, whether considering the technical, ethical, environmental, political, or health-related aspects of production and consumption. This book is a wide-ranging and interdisciplinary examination and critique of meat consumption by humans, throughout their evolution and around the world. Setting the scene with a chapter on meat's role in human evolution and its growing influence during the development of agricultural practices, the book goes on to examine modern production systems, their efficiencies, outputs, and impacts. The major global trends of meat consumption are described in order to find out what part its consumption plays in changing modern diets in countries around the world. The heart of the book addresses the consequences of the "massive carnivory" of western diets, looking at the inefficiencies of production and at the huge impacts on land, water, and the atmosphere. Health impacts are also covered, both positive and negative. In conclusion, the author looks forward at his vision of "rational meat eating", where environmental and health impacts are reduced, animals are treated more humanely, and alternative sources of protein make a higher contribution. *Should We Eat Meat?* is not an ideological tract for or against carnivorousness but rather a careful evaluation of meat's roles in human diets and the environmental and health consequences of its production and consumption. It will be of interest to a wide readership including professionals and academics in food and agricultural production, human health and nutrition, environmental science, and regulatory and policy making bodies around the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Vaclav Smil receives 2015 OPEC Award for Research „Summing Up: Recommended.“  
Upper-division undergraduates and above. (Choice, 1 January 2014)

Meat eating is often a contentious subject, whether considering the technical, ethical, environmental, political, or health-related aspects of production and consumption. This book is a wide-ranging and interdisciplinary examination and critique of meat consumption by humans, throughout their evolution and around the world. Setting the scene with a chapter on meat's role in human evolution and its growing influence during the development of agricultural practices, the book goes on to examine modern production systems, their efficiencies, outputs, and impacts. The major global trends of meat consumption are described in order to find out what part its consumption plays in changing modern diets in countries around the world. The heart of the book addresses the consequences of the "massive carnivory" of western diets, looking at the inefficiencies of production and at the huge impacts on land, water, and the atmosphere. Health impacts are also covered, both positive and negative. In conclusion, the author looks forward at his vision of "rational meat eating", where environmental and health impacts are reduced, animals are treated more humanely, and alternative sources of protein make a higher contribution. *Should We Eat Meat?* is not an ideological tract for or against carnivorousness but rather a careful evaluation of meat's roles in human diets and the environmental and health consequences of its production and consumption. It will be of interest to a wide readership including professionals and academics in food and agricultural production, human health and nutrition, environmental science, and regulatory and policy making bodies around the world.

Very thorough science, but gives beef a passing grade as opposite to the latest World Health Organization recommendation. Beef made us who we are. He suggests how to handle the overwhelming task of getting people at least to cut down before the Earth is finally destroyed. A heavy read. Not for the weak of spirit or the scientifically ignorant. Few politicians are up to the task, unfortunately.

Smil manages to look at the problem of meat consumption from all angles without taking sides. If you're looking for the realities of how consuming meat affects the environment and health this is the book for you. However it's poorly written in my opinion. The phrases are very long and it's difficult to stay focused on the information. This is not an easy read.

I really liked the factual perspective of the argument "Should we eat meat?" The author makes really good points about what it takes to produce meat, many things that I never thought about. The environmental impact is vastly significant. The only thing I didn't like is that the author gets too much into the nitty gritty of nutritional facts and the history of meat eating.

If you're looking for some light reading to pass the time....don't read this book. BUT....if you're looking for some serious insight into all aspects of carnivory and its relation to humans....then this is the book for you. Brought to light much that I was unaware of.

Excellent book, filled with very in-depth analysis.

Any page has an extraordinary research effort, there is no doubt Samil Vaclav is a polymath.

Unbiased and incredible approach to a very controversial topic with various positives and negatives

At times it becomes a little too bogged down in statistics but the main ideas are clear and well thought through.

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