Eating for the Environment

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The proverbial saying 'You are what you eat' suggests that to be fit and healthy you need to eat good food. But have you thought if good food is also good for the planet?

This OpenLearn course, Eating for the Environment, will equip you to explore the links between your food choices and environmental sustainability. It will also help you to think about the bigger picture and look at the cultural and traditional associations of food. You will start to think about the diversity of food on your dinnerplate and what it means for not only your health but also that of our environment.

When we think about 'food security' we think about feeding the world's population and we assume that to feed the world's population we need to grow more food. But there is already plenty of food in the world. The real problem is that this food is not distributed equally. There are pockets of food-affluence and pockets of food-poverty. In this course, you will look at how affordable food is in different countries and how the affordability of your food compares with that of someone living in another part of the world.

To help you think about what you eat a little more carefully you will keep a food diary. By doing this, you can then look at how diverse your food is compared to food eaten in other parts of the world. How many plant and animal species feature in your diet and how do they map on to the Tree of Life? Does this change from day-to-day, week-to-week? How does this compare with another person's diet?

You will also have the opportunity to think about the future of food and explore some very unconventional sources of food such as insects or invasive species.
This course will help you reflect on different possibilities – in the present and in the future – to eat for the environment.