EarthDay2018: Eating as if the Planet Mattered

This Earth Day, April 22\textsuperscript{nd}, is an opportunity to eat in ways that better protect both people and the planet. Eating as if the planet matters means eating more healthful foods, wasting less, helping reverse climate change, and reducing the rates of overfishing and overexploitation of soils. These changes can also help consumers save money and build more resilient communities.

In honor of Earth Day, Food Tank is highlighting five high-impact actions each person can take to eat as if the planet mattered:

1) Tailor your portion sizes.
Overeating hurts more than just our bodies. The environmental impacts of industrialized food production and consumption cost the global economy trillions of dollars through water pollution, habitat destruction, antimicrobial resistance, and other avenues, according to the \textit{International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems} (IPES-Food). Tailoring portion sizes is an efficient way to reduce these environmental burdens.

In 2016, researchers at Tufts University found that 92 percent of restaurant portions at restaurants in Boston, MA, Little Rock, AR, and San Francisco, CA, exceeded the number of recommended calories. A study by nutritionists Marion Nestle and Lisa Young found that portion sizes for pasta dishes at popular take-out, fast-food, and family restaurants in the U.S. are almost five times larger than the individual portion size recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Further, portion sizes are not static. They have been steadily increasing in the U.S. in recent decades, according to research published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. The sizes of individual food items sold in grocery stores, from chocolate bars to beers, has grown by an average of between two and five times, according to Nestle and Young. 