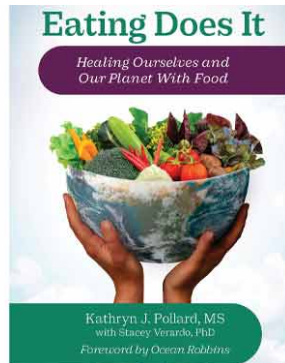


New Book 'Eating Does It' Highlights How Food Choices Can Cure Disease and Combat the Climate Crisis

By Megan Edwards
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Kathy Pollard discovered the power of a plant-based lifestyle in an unlikely place: late-'90s rural Pennsylvania. Her interest in nutrition serendipitously aligned with the North American Vegetarian Society's annual health and nutrition conference, which was being held on a campus just an hour away from Pollard's hometown. There, in unassuming college classrooms and auditorium panel sessions, she discovered a passion that would lead her to become one of the first instructors for [T. Colin Campbell's Center for Nutrition Studies](#), a research projects manager for the [American College of Lifestyle Medicine](#), and adjunct faculty in applied nutrition at the University of New England. This career trajectory introduced her to Stacey Verardo, a paleoclimatologist, who deepened Pollard's understanding of how our [food systems impact climate change](#). Pollard's new book, written in conjunction with Verardo, *Eating Does It: Healing Ourselves and Our Planet With Food*, is the culmination of a career steeped in helping people see the connection between their personal health and the planet's well-being.

The book, available on November 1, takes a deep dive into the intricate—and sometimes surprising—intersections between modern industrialized diets, chronic disease, and climate catastrophes. Pollard's extensively researched work equips readers with the tools to not only make immediate changes in their dietary habits but also to analyze the conflicting claims around nutrition and climate change that often dominate news headlines.

"It's a guidebook on the most attainable solutions that we have to the world's most pressing problems," says Pollard. "But it's structured so that we understand how to discern what's true and what's not. The first section asks, what is science? What's the scientific method? And how do we apply it critically to our everyday lives?"

To make things easy, *Eating Does It* provides readers with a checklist of steps to follow when determining whether a claim is accurate and trustworthy. Pollard's conviction that science-backed decisions are paramount for healing our health and the environment is elaborated on in the bulk of the book's chapters, which look at the impact of chronic disease and climate change in nine different regions around the world.

"These regions are suffering from chronic diseases that are actually [modifiable through diet]," Pollard says. "We've lost our way when it comes to the simple solutions for supporting our health. And it's also not just about the food—it's how you feel after you eat the food. You might feel better and be more prone to take a walk every day. And then before you know it, maybe you'll be able to walk further, which would bring you to a park where you'd meet neighbors and make social connections, which is key for good health. When we start being intentional about what we put on our plates we can just watch the domino effect of good health fall from there."

Our Bodies, Our Ecosystems

Pollard points to our modern food systems as the common denominator between the failing health of our bodies and of our planet. As she points out in the book, eating hamburgers uses 2.9 times more water, 2.5 times more energy, 13 times more fertilizer, and 1.4 times more pesticides than eating vegetarian foods.

"The amount of resources it takes to create any animal product is enormous," says Pollard. "It takes [10 pounds of milk](#) to make one pound of cheese. Think about all the water and the feed that was given to the cows to make that milk. The impact of having a simple cheese sandwich is huge. We could be feeding everybody on

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this earth with enough food if we didn't give that food to animals.”

With so many climate catastrophes happening on a regular basis, Pollard hopes that *Eating Does It* can act as a beacon of hope for those who are struggling to stay optimistic in the face of such large-scale change.

“Hope is a key element to good health,” says Pollard. “We can't accomplish anything without it. I recommend finding your *why* for going plant-based. For many of us, it's helping the world, helping others, finding reasons to benefit beyond ourselves. That will keep us committed to a lifestyle that benefits the planet.”

Kathy Pollard's 4 Food Rules

Change doesn't happen overnight, which is why the last portion of *Eating Does It* includes an easily customizable menu of actions—both big and small—that you can take to better support your health and the environment. Regardless of which new practices you're able to adopt, Pollard recommends keeping these core guidelines in mind when switching to a plant-based diet.

1. The more whole plants in your diet, the better.

Simple as that. Avoid processed foods as much as possible.

2. Don't sweat the small stuff.

Sometimes you'll go to a birthday party and have a cupcake, and that's OK. Pollard emphasizes that your overall health is dependent on your everyday dietary pattern, not the small deviations.

3. Eat the rainbow.

The phytochemicals and [antioxidants](#) in colorful fruits and veggies protect you from toxins and disease. Try to eat many different colors of whole plant foods every day.

4. Eat as much WFPB food as you want.

On a whole-food, plant-based diet you can eat as much as you want as long as it has intact fiber. This means whole grains, beans, whole fruit, and veggies that haven't

been processed or extracted. This dietary lifestyle allows you to eat until you're full without watching portion size because it's so healthy.

While Pollard acknowledges that we can't solve climate change through how we eat alone, she contends that this is a critical first step to pressure large industries to shift their production practices to more sustainable solutions. A plant-based diet can function as a springboard for greater change, both in our health and our environment.

“We don't have to wait for policy to change,” says Pollard. “We don't have to wait for infrastructure to be built. We have a lot to do in this world to reverse the course of climate change, but the most effective and immediate tool we have is right in front of us every time we sit down to eat.”

To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#). For meal-planning support, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.