FACTS FROM THE DOCUMENTARY **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

COWS: MORE THAN EMISSIONS

Cows are often front and center in conversations about climate change and emissions, as these animals are widely perceived as being harmful to the environment. But is that the whole story?

With a rare level of access to farmers, food producers and global experts, filmmakers Michelle Michael and Brandon Whitworth set out on a journey across the world to find out. What they discovered is that while cows do contribute to climate change, their comprehensive impact on our world is more complex and worth considering. For example, cows also:



Support soil health by boosting soil fertility



through manure and grazing

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Nourish people

by providing critical nutrients for humans that are not easily obtained from other sources



Upcycle waste

by turning waste we can't eat into nutrient-dense food we need





Support carbon capture through regenerative grazing, which helps store carbon in the soil

Protect biodiversity as they support diverse ecosystems on grazing lands

WORLD WITHOUT COWS

Did you know?

1/2 OF METHANE EMISSIONS

Half of the world's methane emissions come from agriculture, forestry and other land uses.

78% OF GHG EMISSIONS

Fossil fuels are responsible for 78% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. Cows? Just 5%.

1.2 DEGREES CELSIUS

The Earth's temperature is <u>1.2° Celsius</u> hotter than in pre-industrial times. Things will get drastically worse at 1.5°, which is set to happen by 2040 at our current rate of warming.

40 MILLION ACRES

The Dust Bowl destroyed 40 million acres of productive farmland due to poor farming practices and droughts.

"If we want to truly mitigate climate change, we need animals on the landscape."

-Gabe Brown, Owner, Brown's Ranch, Bismarck, North Dakota

RETHINKING COWS & CLIMATE

When it comes to understanding the complex relationship between cattle and the environment, knowledge is key. Let's clear up some common myths about cows and their impact on our planet.

🗙 Myth	✓ Fact
Cows are responsible for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions.	Data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that cows are responsible for just 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions . <u>Fossil fuels are</u> <u>responsible for 78%</u> .
Methane from cattle is the same as carbon emissions from fossil fuels.	Methane and carbon dioxide <u>behave very differently in</u> <u>the atmosphere</u> . Methane from cattle breaks down within about 12 years , while CO ₂ from fossil fuels can persist for centuries, building up over time.
The land that cows graze on could be used to grow crops instead.	Studies from Rothamsted Reseach — one of the world's longest-running agricultural research institutions — show that <u>converting grazing land to grow crops instead</u> is not just impractical; it would lead to consequences for the environment. In their "Meat vs. Wheat" experiment, wheat crops grown on former pasture had a success rate as low as 28%, and conversion of the land boosted the risk of carbon loss, erosion and long-term damage.
Having everyone go vegan would solve climate change.	While switching to a vegan diet can lower your carbon footprint, the overall impact of doing so is smaller than many think. For example, <u>if the entire U.S. went vegan</u> , greenhouse gas emissions would drop by just 2.6% — and a nationwide Meatless Monday would cut emissions by only 0.3%.

On average, Florida's Buck Island Ranch **captures more carbon each year than it emits**, sequestering 1,201 tons of CO₂ equivalent.

The 10,500-acre ranch with 3,000 beef cattle is a **net carbon sink**!

Learn more >>



According to Allen, **removing cows and other ruminant animals from the land would devastate soil microbial populations**. But regenerative agricultural practices can restore the soil and enhance its carbon-capturing abilities — positioning cows as powerful weapons in combating climate change.