

Peace & Justice Report

For the week of December 15, 2017

TOTAL HEALTH COSTS OF INDUSTRIAL FOOD SYSTEMS ARE 'STAGGERING'

Chances are you've heard the line that the climate crisis affects all of us, wherever we live and whether we know it or not. But how? Especially if you haven't been personally touched by a climate-related [hurricane](#) or [drought](#) or other [weather event](#)?...

If we keep burning fossil fuels at our current rates, food may become harder and harder to grow in many places, and what does grow could be less and less nutritious. Fresh drinking water could become more and more scarce as polluted floodwater runoff contaminates rivers, lakes and reservoirs—or drought and warming combine to simply dry it all up...

Carbon and the "Junk Food Effect"

And the same carbon pollution that is driving these trends all over the globe may also be having an impact we are only just now beginning to understand. It may be compromising food quality. [Recent research points to a disturbing trend](#)—increased levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere may be making our food less nutritious. Some researchers—who have witnessed a measurable drop in the minerals, vitamins and protein content in fruits and vegetables over the past 50 to 70 years—have called this the "junk food effect."...

While this area of research is relatively new, scientists hypothesize that increased atmospheric CO₂ speeds up photosynthesis, the process that helps plants transform sunlight to food. This makes plants grow faster, but in so doing, they pack in more **carbohydrates** like glucose at the expense of other essential nutrients human beings (and other animals, right down the food chain) depend on.

"It's a hidden issue," [said Kristie Ebi](#), a researcher at the University of Washington who's studied the intersection of [climate change](#) and global health for two decades. "The fact that my bread doesn't have the micronutrients it did 20 years ago—how would you know?"

Looking to do your part to protect food and water security right now? Download our latest free e-book, [Right Under Your Feet: Soil Health and the Climate Crisis](#). The resource outlines the climate threat to agriculture and offers concrete actions you can take to help provide fresh, healthy food grown in a sustainable soil ecosystem for generations to come.

Read more: <https://www.ecowatch.com/food-water-climate-crisis-2493717359.html>

