

BM launches low carbon menus

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BM has announced the launch of a range of new low carbon menus – aiming to continue to improve its impact on the environment and the people it serves.

Titled *'Eat With The Earth in Mind'*, the menus aim to raise awareness and understanding of the impact an activity or item has on the climate; from its creation, transportation and use, to its destruction or wastage. By learning which foods have the largest and smallest carbon footprints, businesses can help reduce individual carbon footprints, and help to educate wider consumers who come into contact with their brands.

BM will be launching this initiative with extensive chef training and roadshows to educate and inform customers about how to eat with a lower impact. It will also form part of the reporting provided to clients.

Eat With The Earth In Mind

A carbon footprint usually refers to the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) that something creates, mainly carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide. These gases can trap heat in the atmosphere, which causes global warming.

Statistics show that beef and animal products such as dairy generate the largest amount of food-related GHG. Lamb is also believed to have a large footprint.

Both cows and sheep require a lot of animal feed, plus they experience 'enteric fermentation' – their stomachs break down food to produce methane.

Foods with the lowest GHG emissions are plants and vegetables but how these crops are produced can create a huge variation in their carbon footprint.

Buying strawberries from a local pick-your-own farm shop in summer will have very low emissions – and so a smaller carbon footprint – but buying out-of-season strawberries grown in UK hothouses will have a larger carbon footprint due to the energy and fertilisers needed to produce them.

Researchers from Oxford University found swapping just one red meat meal for a plant-based dinner every week could cut the UK's carbon footprint by 50 million tonnes.

Eating 'wonky' produce can also cut your food carbon footprint. A 2018 study by the [University of Edinburgh](#) found over 50 million tonnes of misshapen fruit and vegetables are thrown away in the UK and Europe every year – the climate change impact is equivalent to the emissions of almost 400,000 cars.

Waste management will also form a major part of the new initiative. In the UK, we throw away 7.1 million tonnes of food every year, and almost 70% of that waste (5 million tonnes) is food that could still be eaten. This food waste is associated with 14 million tonnes of CO₂, so eating leftovers can cut carbon and your food costs. Big focus on waste base cooking.

The initiative will also focus heavily on reducing food miles, ethical trading and collaboration with local businesses.

Kevin Macey, BM executive chef, leading the project, said: "Educating our teams and customers about reducing the amount of emissions in the food we eat is a simple way I can contribute to reducing climate change".

"We know that people want to make both dietary changes to improve their health, and do what they can to help tackle climate change. Our Eat with the Earth in Mind initiative absolutely addresses these priorities and I am really looking forward to rolling out the exciting customer engagement communications to support Kevin and the rest of BM."