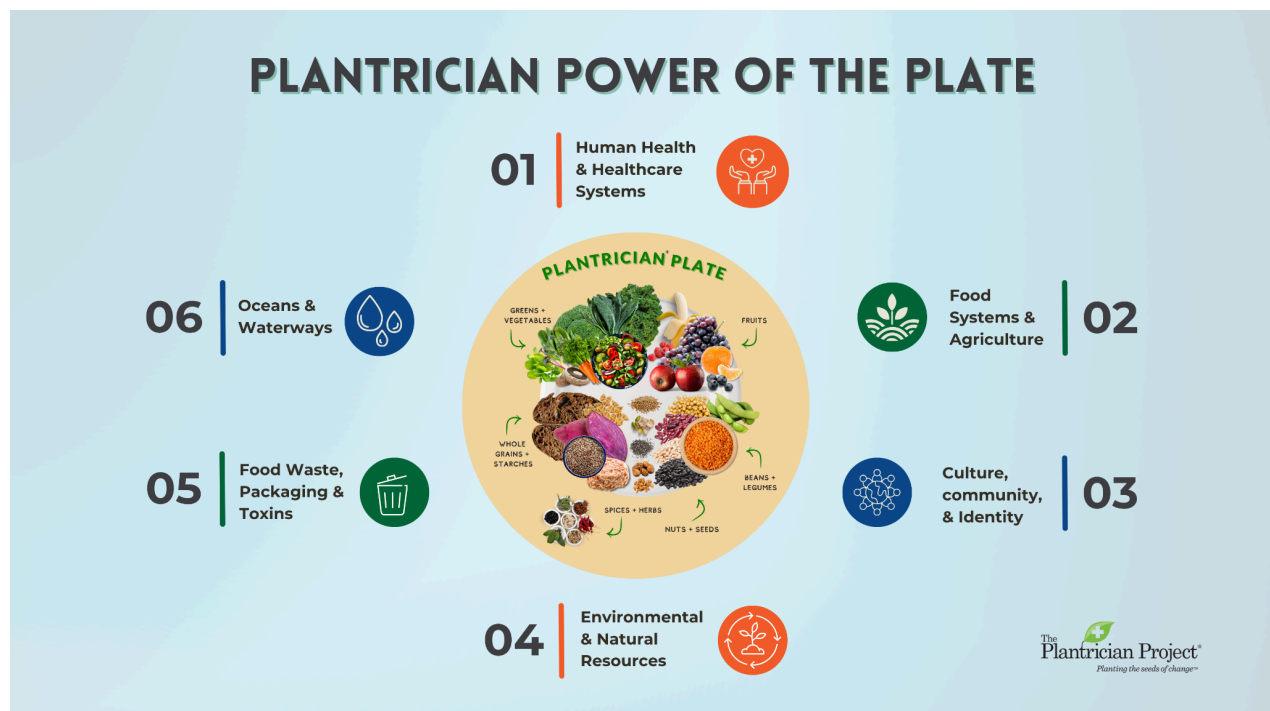


The Six Pillars of the Power of the Plate

The full interconnectedness of the **Power of the Plate** shows that the way **we grow, produce, and consume food shapes individual health and also influences the health of communities, economies, and ecosystems.** This interconnected lens comes to life through six evidence-based domains that highlight how food choices ripple across every level of society and the natural world.



Pillar 01: Human Health & Healthcare Systems

- Diets high in red and processed meat are associated with higher risks of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and colorectal cancer.
- Replacing meat-heavy dietary patterns with plant-forward diets may reduce all-cause mortality by up to 20%.
- Chronic diseases driven by lifestyle factors—including diet—account for nearly 90% of U.S. healthcare spending.
- Whole-food, plant-based diets improve blood pressure, lipid profiles, inflammation, and glycemic control, making them a cornerstone of preventive care

Pillar 02: Food Systems & Agriculture

- Industrial livestock production (CAFOs) supplies more than 99% of U.S. meat, eggs, and dairy, concentrating environmental and public-health impacts.
- Global per-capita meat consumption has nearly doubled since the 1960s, accelerating land use, feed crop expansion, and climate pressures.
- Transitioning to plant-based diets could reduce global agricultural greenhouse gas emissions by up to 49%.
- Regenerative organic agriculture practices, cover cropping, composting, and diversified rotations, can increase soil organic carbon while reducing synthetic fertilizer use.

Pillar 03: Culture, Community & Identity

- Dietary change is strongly influenced by cultural norms, social support, and shared identity, making community-based interventions more effective.
- Communities with strong food traditions rooted in whole plant foods—such as Blue Zones—experience longer life expectancy and lower chronic disease rates.
- Access to culturally relevant, affordable plant-based foods improves adherence to healthy eating patterns across diverse populations.
- Community food programs, from urban gardens to collective kitchens, improve nutrition security and strengthen social cohesion.

Pillar 04: Environmental & Natural Resources

- Livestock production uses about 77% of global agricultural land while providing only 18% of calories.
- Food production accounts for roughly 26% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with animal agriculture responsible for the majority.
- Agriculture is the largest global driver of deforestation, with beef production contributing the most to forest loss in the Amazon basin.
- Regenerative organic farming systems can enhance water retention, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration compared with conventional monocultures.

Pillar 05: Food Waste, Packaging & Toxins

- Roughly one third of all food produced globally, over 1.3 billion tons, is lost or wasted each year.

- Food waste generates 8–10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, largely as methane from landfills.
- Plastic packaging accounts for about 40% of global plastic use, with food and beverage packaging as the largest contributor.
- Chemical residues from pesticides, industrial packaging, and food processing can accumulate in soil, waterways, and human tissues.

Pillar 06: Oceans & Waterways

- Agriculture accounts for about 70% of global freshwater withdrawals, primarily for livestock feed and irrigation.
- Nutrient runoff from large-scale livestock and crop operations is the leading cause of harmful algal blooms and ocean dead zones.
- Industrial meat production contributes heavily to nitrate contamination in rural drinking water systems.
- Regenerative farming systems can reduce nutrient runoff significantly through healthy soil, reduced tillage, and organic amendments.

The Power of the Plate is more than a framework. It is a movement that connects the health of people with the health of the planet and the systems that sustain us. To explore these pillars with global leaders in nutrition, medicine, agriculture, sustainability, and food-system innovation, join us at the [Power Of The Plate Conference](#). It is where the science deepens, the solutions expand, and a community of changemakers comes together to build a healthier future for all.

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