

Hon James Shaw

Minister for Climate Change
Minister of Statistics
Associate Minister of Finance

Minita mō Te Rerekētanga o Te Āhuarangi
Minita Tatauranga
Hoa Minita Tahua Moni



M. Grainger

fyi-request-7988-48848b7f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M. Grainger

I write in response to your Official Information Act request of 4 June 2018

Can you please enumerate with facts, figures and hard data what impact on climate change will happen if one person eats one less meat meal per week?

I am refusing your request under section 18(d) of the Act, on the grounds that the information you have requested is publicly available.

For example, you may be interested in a recent article by J. Poore and T. Nemecek, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Science*, titled "Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers". This is available online at <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/360/6392/987>. It has been widely reported in the media and is what I was asked about on Q+A.

The study uses data from 40,000 farms in 119 countries. It highlights that different ways of producing different foods have varying environmental impacts. For example, farming beef cattle on natural pasture contributes 12 times less greenhouse gases than farming beef cattle on deforested land. It also shows how in general, most plant-based foods have lower environmental impacts than most meats.

There are many ways people can choose to have lower impacts on the environment. Some may choose to walk or cycle instead of driving. Some may buy an electric car, or install solar panels. Some may change their diets or grow more food at home. Some may move their financial investments into clean energy projects. I do not advocate any particular solutions for any particular person. I believe people can make up their own minds.

The Government is committed to taking action on climate change to help ensure a stable climate for future generations. Making a plan and taking common sense actions now will help avoid radical changes in the future. We are focussed on establishing the big-picture frameworks to support individual actions, like the proposed Zero Carbon Bill and Independent Climate Change Commission. New Zealand is a small country but we cannot expect the larger countries that contribute more to climate change to reduce their emissions if we don't also pull our weight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Shaw'.

Hon. James Shaw