

Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers

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The global impacts of food production

Food is produced and processed by millions of farmers and intermediaries globally, with substantial associated environmental costs. Given the heterogeneity of producers, what is the best way to reduce food's environmental impacts? Poore and Nemecek consolidated data on the multiple environmental impacts of ~38,000 farms producing 40 different agricultural goods around the world in a meta-analysis comparing various types of food production systems. The environmental cost of producing the same goods can be highly variable. However, this heterogeneity creates opportunities to target the small numbers of producers that have the most impact.

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