



Unwrapping the Ethics of a Fast-Food Hamburger

The Bun

Positive Impact:

- Nutritional value can be added to, such as vitamin benefits.
- Grains are recommended food group from USDA

Negative Impact:

Bread used by fast food restaurants has been shown to include the following additives: L-cysteine, potassium bromate (makes bread "fluffy"), refined grains (essentially, whole grains stripped of their nutritional value), and azodicarbonamide. These items are connected to a variety of health issues.



Cheese

Positive Impact:

- Easy, convenient nutrition/ calcium provider
- Longer shelf life; cost effective

Negative Impact:

- Female cows are separated from their young very soon after birth, and forced to produce 10 times the amount of milk that they would naturally in a lifetime (and would be used for their young).

- Mastitis, or the painful inflammation and infection of the udders, is common. Cows are given various hormones and antibiotics, and trace amounts are transmitted to the milk.



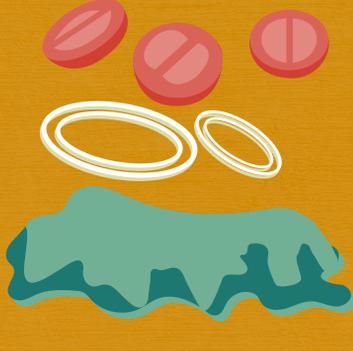
Lettuce, Tomatoes, Onions

Positive Impact:

- Improvements in biotechnology, spurred by the agriculture industry, have made produce resistant to disease, viable outside of their season, and easier to produce. This has improved accessibility for both the developed and developing world.
- The farm industry has long been struggling since the Industrial Revolution; large-scale restaurants including fast food restaurants are major sustainers of the farm industry.

Negative Impact:

- Most of the produce consumed in the US has been genetically modified in some way and sprayed with pesticides.
- Child labor (12+ years) is allowed in farm labor.



Hamburger Patty

Positive Impact:

- The meat harvesting industry offers jobs to populations who might otherwise not be able to find work.
- Animal waste products can be utilized into fertilizers and other products that are environmentally friendly and useful.

Negative Impact:

- 51%+ of greenhouse gases are caused by animal agriculture. A large number of slaughterhouse workers is undocumented immigrants who are paid under the table below minimum wage, have no health benefits, and no employment protections.



Bacon

Positive Impact:

- Good sources of protein
- People love it - tastes GOOD!

Negative Impact:

- Notorious for being produced via factory-farming methods such as overcrowding, artificial insemination and genetic engineering.



Transportation of Ingredients

Positive Impact:

- Truck drivers earn a median wage of \$37,930 , which is \$4,000 more than median wage for all jobs. Further, trucking companies generally offer quite comprehensive benefits packages.
- Major trucking associations recognize their role in environmental issues and are developing improvements and alternatives to alleviate the carbon footprint of the trucking industry..

Negative Impact:

- Because ingrediens are often not grown or produced near individual restaurants, they must be shipped long distances. This adds to carbon emissions, which affect the ozone layer.



- Truck drivers are expected to move items within tight timeframes, which has been known to cause intense stress, sleep deprivation, and drug dependency.

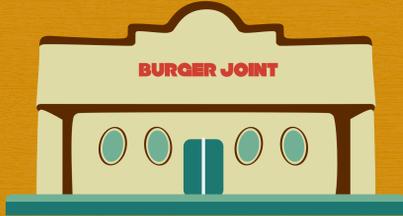
Individual Fast Food Restaurants

Positive Impact:

- Fast food restaurants offer job prospects for those with very little job experience or education.
- Employees are, more often than not, able to build their own work schedule, allowing them to control how many hours they are to work and when.

Negative Impact:

- The majority of fast food restaurants pay their employees only the minimum wage with little opportunity for raises. The result of this is that around 50% of employees rely on public assistance to support themselves, and don't have access to company-offered health insurance.



- Because of regulations relating to how long food can be left out and/or under a heat lamp, fast food restaurants dispose of a significant amount of food- as a result fast food restaurant trash comprises about 50% of urban street trash.

Consumer

Positive Impact:

- Provides quick and easy access to food.
- Offers a variety of foods for very little money.

Negative Impact:

- Regular consumers of fast food are more likely to be overweight and obese, which are connected to other health issues.

- Food deserts are defined as areas in which the major sources of food are fast food and very few healthy food options are available.



Bon Appétit!

Integrating Ethics: from Thought to Action

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