

# Proposed Food Policy: “Plant-Based by Default”

## Why plant-based?

There is strong scientific evidence that the food industry massively contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. This impact can be drastically reduced by switching from the current average ‘western’ diet to a plant-based diet.

According to the IPCC\*, **the most effective diet to fight climate change is a plant-based diet.** For example, it was calculated that such a change, in 2010, would have led to up to a **30% net reduction of total, global GHG emissions.**

## Our proposed solution:

Based on this evidence, **we suggest that plant-based food is set as the default option for meals served at KTH.** This would help KTH reach its sustainability targets, as well as assert its leading position in fighting climate change. To ensure inclusion of all dietary needs and freedom of choice, we suggest that KTH sets plant-based food as the default food option served both on a regular basis and at its events, **yet giving each single person the possibility and freedom to choose a different food option.**

## Implementation

**For example,** when choosing among food options at an event, we suggest that what nowadays reads like:

**Dietary requirements/preferences (vegan, allergies...)**

from tomorrow will read like:

**Dietary requirements/preferences (allergies, vegetarian/fish/meat)**

\*Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, i.e., *the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change*. In August 2019, they released the report *Climate Change and Land*, an extensive literature review of scientific articles related to the topic (climate change and land).

## **Appendix: benefits of the “plant-based-by-default” food policy**

- ✓ **Immediate reduction of KTH carbon footprint;**
- ✓ **Raising awareness** for sustainable lifestyle among employees, students and guests, possibly generating a **cascade effect**;
- ✓ News will spread beyond KTH, **establishing KTH as a leading entity** in addressing the climate crisis and **leading the way for other universities, companies, and individuals**;
- ✓ An institution like KTH increasing the demand for plant-based food and the cascade effect it generates will **lead the food industry to elaborate and provide more, tastier, and more affordable dishes**, making it easier for people to choose plant-based options;
- ✓ **“Plant-based-by-default” is an inclusive food option**: Different cultures/ ethical movements exclude (some) animal products from their diet. Nowadays, these people have to explicitly ask for a different food option to respect their beliefs/ethics. Switching to “plant-based-by-default” the default food option would include everyone independent of their culture.
- ✓ **Increases the attractiveness of KTH** as a university and employer for students and employees concerned about climate change.