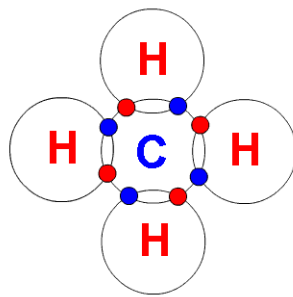


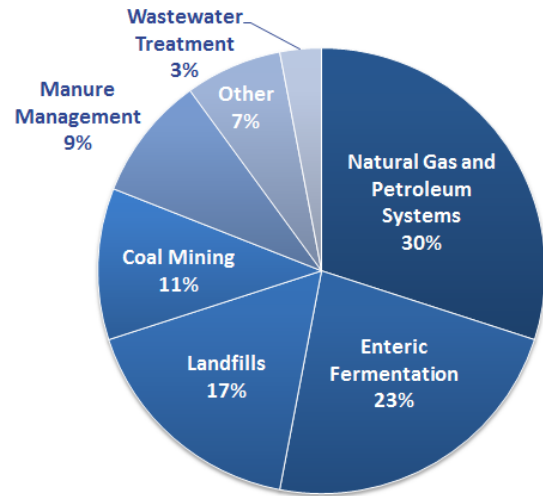
THE FOODPRINT: EYES ON METHANE

We all know something about the carbon footprint, a little less about the plastic footprint, and — may be we haven't heard (yet) about the **foodprint**.

What is the **foodprint**? It's all related to methane.

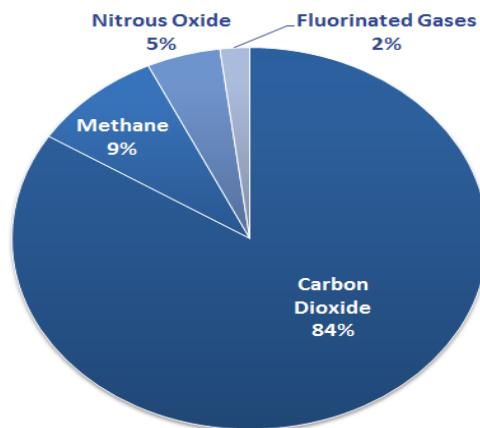


Methane is a colorless, odorless gas with a wide distribution in nature. It is the principal component of natural gas. National Geographic calls it the “Good Gas, Bad Gas” and it goes on to say: “Burn natural gas and it warms your house. But let it leak, from fracked wells or the melting Arctic, and it warms the whole planet.” To this, we can add: that, globally, over 60% of total methane emissions come from human activities. Methane is emitted from industry, agriculture, and waste management activities,



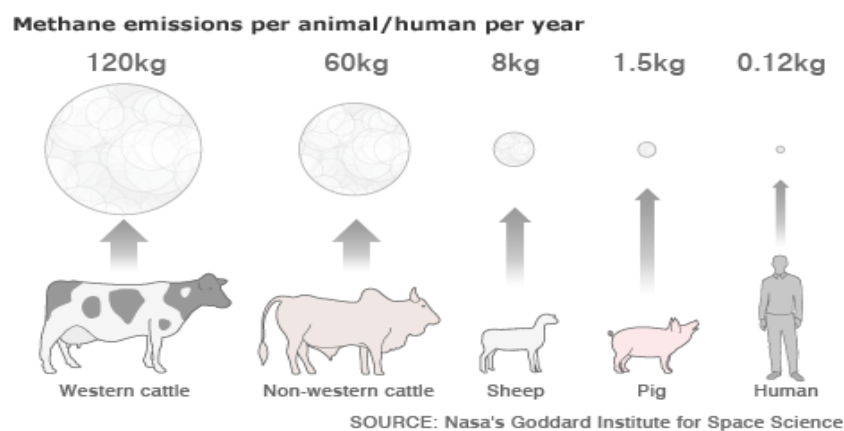
Environmental Protection Agency

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas — its presence in the atmosphere affects the Earth’s temperature and climate system. Although carbon dioxide is the major component of greenhouse gases, the global warming potential of methane is 21 times higher than that of carbon dioxide (21 times is an estimate – if you look around, you can find different sources reporting different numbers, 20 or 23 instead of 21, for example).



Environmental Protection Agency

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), domestic livestock such as cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, and camels produce large amounts of methane as part of their normal digestive process. In addition, methane is produced when animals' manure is stored or managed in lagoons or holding tanks. Because humans raise these animals for food, the emissions are considered human-related. Globally, the agriculture sector is the primary source of methane emissions.

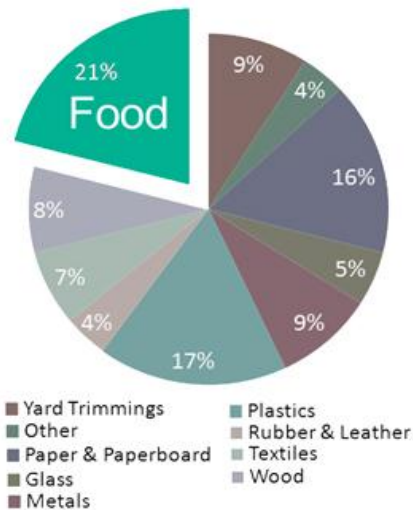


There is something more to think about. What happens to the food we throw away? It gets disposed in landfills, where it is decomposed by bacteria under anaerobic conditions (i.e., in the absence of oxygen) and becomes a significant source of methane.

In the US, more food reaches landfills and incinerators than any other single material in municipal solid waste.

According to the EPA, landfills are a major source of human-related methane in the United States — accounting for more than 20 percent of all methane emissions.

Food makes up the largest percentage of waste going into municipal landfills and combusted for energy recovery



Data from the 2010 Municipal Solid Waste Characterization Report

Environmental Protection Agency

In 2010 alone, more than 34 million tons of food waste was generated. Of these 34 million tons, only three percent was diverted for composting.

How can we decrease the foodprint? Composting, composting, composting —

However, composting works well for food waste that has already been

generated. What about changing our mindset and finding ways to reduce the

amount of food we waste on a daily basis?



Source: <http://theglobalfool.com/the-foodprint-eyes-on-methane-2/>