

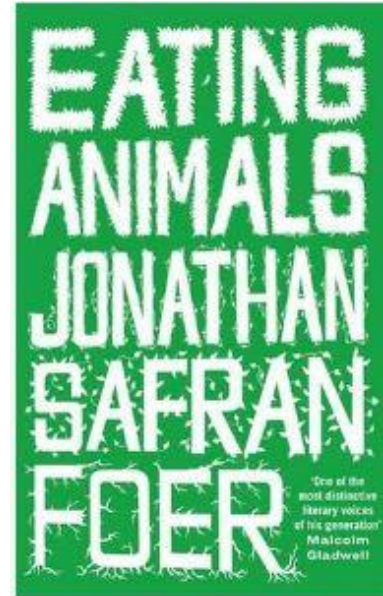
Clarkson University Common Conversations Resource Guide

Eating Animals - Jonathan Safran Foer

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Summary

Like many young Americans, Jonathan Safran Foer spent much of his teenage and college years oscillating between enthusiastic carnivore and occasional vegetarian. As he became a husband, and then a father, the moral dimensions of eating became increasingly important to him. Faced with the prospect of being unable to explain why we eat some animals and not others, Foer sets out to explore the origins of many eating traditions and the fictions involved with creating them. [Eating Animals](#) reads like a journal, walking the reader through the author's odyssey to learn everything he can about food production and food related health and environmental concerns. It is an unusual book as both a well-researched work of non-fiction and the story of a family. It is at once deeply scientific and research-driven and a moving memoir about a new parent and erstwhile dog owner with a genuinely urgent question. *Eating Animals* is not a simple argument for vegetarianism. Foer is careful to clarify that he is not making a case for or against eating meat. Rather, he poses a number of questions to which he offers a number of answers; about how food is produced and how those processes are impacting the environment and our health; about how animals are treated and viewed by the human race and whether, or how much, we care, about their suffering. The title may be simple, but the conversation is not.



The Author

[Jonathan Safran Foer Bio & Blog](#)

includes bio, interviews, videos, book lists

[Jonathan Safran Foer on the Morality of Vegetarianism](#)

2009 interview with Jeffrey Goldberg in *The Atlantic*

[Washington Post Q&A's with Foer on "Eating Animals"](#)

[Jonathan Safran Foer & Aaron Gross on \(Not\) Eating Animals](#) (video)

[Jonathan Safran Foer Talks About Our Health to Ellen](#) (video)

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Organizations for Change

[Farm Forward](#)

Farm Forward implements innovative strategies to promote conscientious food choices, reduce farmed animal suffering, and advance sustainable agriculture.

[Farm Sanctuary](#)

Established in 1986, this group is the nation's largest and most effective farm animal rescue and protection organization.

[Food and Water Watch](#)

This public interest organization champions “healthy food and clean water for all” and works toward a future that includes wholesome food, clean water, and sustainable energy.

[Food Democracy Now!](#)

A grassroots community dedicated to building a sustainable food system that protects our natural environment, sustains farmers, and nourishes families.

[Humane Society of the United States](#)

The nation’s largest and most effective animal protection organization.

[People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals](#)

The largest animal rights organization in the world.

[Sierra Club](#)

Founded by legendary conservationist John Muir in 1892, the Sierra Club is the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

[Sustainable Table](#)

Sustainable Table celebrates local sustainable food, educates consumers about the benefits of sustainable agriculture, and works to build community through food.

More to Explore

[Environmental Working Group Meat Eater’s Guide to Climate Change and Health](#)

[The Ethics of Eating](#)

A free online course through Cornell University. Explore the ethical issues you confront each time you decide what to eat or purchase food. Join a diverse group of philosophers, food scientists, activists, industry specialists, and farmers in this exciting discussion. This course is archived - you may still view the content.

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Related Reads

A small selection of titles available through the Clarkson Libraries at the time of this common conversation.

There are many more texts to explore on this topic.

[Ethical Treatment of Animals book lists](#)

An American Library Association (ALA) Choice 'bibliographic essay'. An extensive survey of literature published in the last 10 years on this topic.

[Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life](#)

With characteristic poetry and pluck, Barbara Kingsolver and her family sweep readers along on their journey away from the industrial-food pipeline to a rural life in which they vow to buy only food raised in their own neighborhood, grow it themselves, or learn to live without it. Their good-humored search yields surprising discoveries about turkey sex life and overly zealous zucchini plants, en route to a food culture that's better for the neighborhood and also better on the table. Part memoir, part journalistic investigation, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* makes a passionate case for putting the kitchen back at the center of family life and diversified farms at the center of the American diet.

[Animals and Agency: An interdisciplinary Exploration](#)

This collection examines the question of nonhuman animal agency by shifting emphasis from the human perspective toward that of other animals, exploring modes of animal resistance to human behaviors, and considering the ways the presence of animals refracts human notions like agency and species.

[Bringing it to the Table: on Farming and Food](#)

Only a farmer could delve so deeply into the origins of food, and only a writer of Wendell Berry's caliber could convey it with such conviction and eloquence. Long before Whole Foods organic produce was available at your local supermarket, Berry was farming with the purity of food in mind. For the last five decades, Berry has embodied mindful eating through his land practices and his writing. In recognition of that influence, Michael Pollan here offers an introduction to this wonderful collection.

[Chicken: The Dangerous Transformation of America's Favorite Food](#)

Modern chicken production and consumption is embedded in a fascinating web of political, economic, social, and even psychological factors that need to be described, understood, and questioned.

Anthropologist Steve Striffler begins this book in a poultry processing plant, drawing on his own experiences there as a worker. He also reports on the way chickens are raised today and how they are consumed. What he discovers about America's favorite meat is not just unpleasant but a powerful indictment of our industrial food system. The process of bringing chicken to our dinner tables is unhealthy for all concerned—from farmer to factory worker to consumer.

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[Every Farm a Factory: The Industrial Ideal in American Agriculture](#)

During the early decades of the 20th century, agricultural practice in America was transformed from a pre-industrial to an industrial activity. In this study, Deborah Fitzgerald argues that farms became modernized in the 1920s because they adopted not only new machinery but also the financial, cultural and ideological apparatus of industrialism.

[Livestock Handling and Transport](#)

Handling and transport present some of the most severe stresses that farmed animals are likely to experience. There is growing interest in this subject, for reasons that are economic and related to animal welfare. All aspects are covered including handling for veterinary and husbandry procedures, restraint methods, transport systems, and design of facilities on farm and at slaughter plants.

[Milk Money: Cash, Cows, and the Death of the American Dairy Farm](#)

This gripping investigation uncovers the hidden forces behind dairy farm consolidation, and explains why milk - a staple commodity subject to both government oversight and industry collusion - has proven so tricky to stabilize.

[The Omnivore's Dilemma: a Natural History of Four Meals](#)

The question of what to have for dinner has confronted us since man first discovered fire. But, as Michael Pollan explains in this revolutionary book, how we answer it now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, may determine our survival as a species. Packed with profound surprises, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* is changing the way Americans think about the politics, perils, and pleasures of eating.

[Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect, and Inhumane Treatment Inside the U.S. Meat Industry](#)

What started out, with a single complaint about a Florida slaughterhouse turned into a tale of intrigue and suspense as investigator Gail A. Eisnitz unearthed more startling information about the meat and poultry Americans consume. This shocking story follows Eisnitz as she becomes submerged in a slaughterhouse subculture, venturing deeper and deeper into the lives of the workers.