

Summer Grilling

Why we care

Charcoal grills are widely popular for the flavor they give to meats and veggies. But flavor is just one thing to consider. Charcoal grills release more pollutants into the air and twice as much carbon as gas grills. Lighter fluid used to start charcoal fires adds even more pollutants to the air, and fat and juices that drip onto the flames form a char that contains chemicals that may lead to cancer. *What* you grill matters as much, or more, than *how* you grill. Red meat has the greatest environmental impact. Chicken and fish have a greater impact than vegetables.

Simple, positive steps

If You Use Charcoal

- Choose lump varieties made from wood harvested from a sustainably managed forest, such as Trader Joe's Hardwood Briquettes.
- Dunk charcoal in a bucket of water and dry for later use.
- Use a chemical-free chimney starter or an electric starter.

When Using Any Grill

- Keep preheating to a minimum. Most gas grills are ready to cook in 5 to 10 minutes. Charcoal takes 15 to 20.
- Keep the hood down to maintain energy efficiency.
- Clean your grill with a wire brush while it is still hot. When cool, use a paste of water and baking soda.

Reduce Smoke & Char

- Choose lean meats and trim the fat.
- Marinate to reduce the formation of dangerous chemicals.
- Flip frequently.
- Cook meats that don't take long, such as fish or kebobs.
- To prevent meat from burning, oil the grill rack.
- Grill vegetarian!

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.