

# Edible Insects

If you've ever seen the Lion King, you'll know that Timon and Pumbaa love to eat insects. How about you? Would you jump for joy if you were served a plate of bugs? In some cultures, eating insects as a snack or as part of a meal is very normal. In Thailand, for example, grasshoppers are a tasty snack which are enjoyed at local food markets. This may not sound like your refreshment of choice, but one day it could be. Watch out: insects are on their way!

So, which insects can you eat? It's not quite as simple as eating worms from your garden. In fact, this is not recommended at all. Edible insects are insect species that are safe for human consumption. They may be eaten whole or used as an ingredient in processed foods such as burgers or bread. Some insects can even be surprisingly tasty. Many insects taste similar to shellfish. So, if you like shrimp or crab, you may be in for a treat.

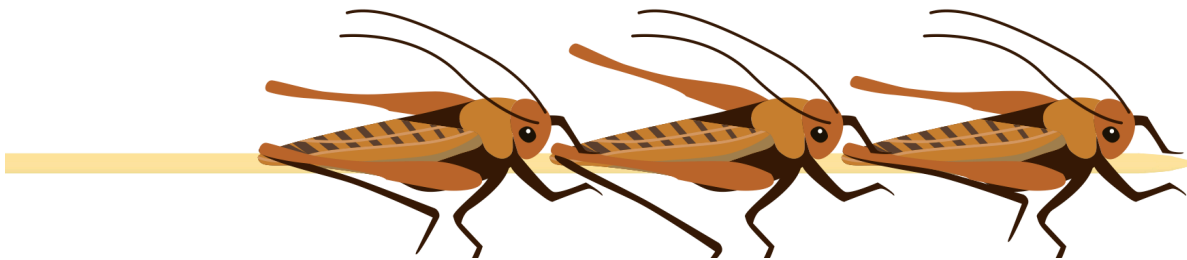
It turns out that eating more insects could be good for the planet as well as our taste buds. Globally, we consume around 350 million tons of meat each year. On top of this, demand is growing. Producing all of this meat, and beef in particular, puts a lot of pressure on our environment. Huge amounts of the rainforest have been destroyed for grazing or growing feedstuff for cattle. Now for the smelly business. Cows also release methane gas (mainly when they burp and fart). Methane is a greenhouse gas which contributes to global warming. Farming insects is much more environmentally friendly than farming beef, in particular. Insects take up much less space and produce fewer greenhouse gases.

Our global population is also rising. This means that there are more



people to feed. To avoid shortages in food, insects could be the answer. They're actually quite good for us too. They are a great source of protein and minerals, and they are low in fat. Insects can also be good for your immune system (which means that you will be less likely to get ill).

So our creepy crawly friends could be the solution to many of our global problems. Consumers may just need persuading that insects could actually be more yum than yuck.



# Questions

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- 1 Used in paragraph 1, what does the phrase 'jump for joy' mean? (tick)

- ☐ To be extremely happy.
- ☐ To jump up in the air.
- ☐ To jump away.
- ☐ To be terrified.

- 2 In which country are grasshoppers eaten as a tasty snack?
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- 3 According to the text, which statement is true? (tick)

- ☐ Garden worms are edible.
- ☐ Worms are safe for human consumption.
- ☐ Worms can be eaten whole.
- ☐ You should not eat worms from your garden.

- 4 According to the text, which statement is true? (tick)

- ☐ If you like burgers or bread, you may like insects.
- ☐ If you like shrimp or crab, you may like insects.
- ☐ All insects taste like shrimp or crab.
- ☐ Insects do not taste like shellfish.

- 5 Used in paragraph 3, what does 'demand is growing' mean? (tick)

- ☐ People want to eat less meat.
- ☐ Animals are growing.
- ☐ People want to eat more meat.
- ☐ People are asking for meat.

- 6 Name the greenhouse gas that cows release.

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- 7 What does the sentence below mean?

‘Our global population is also rising.’ (tick)

- ☐ The number of people living on our planet is going up.
- ☐ The globe is growing.
- ☐ The population is rising into space.
- ☐ There are fewer people living on the globe.

- 8 Which statement about edible insects is NOT true? (tick)

- ☐ Edible insects are a great source of protein.
- ☐ Edible insects are a good source of minerals.
- ☐ Edible insects are low in fat.
- ☐ Edible insects are bad for your immune system.

- 9 Write the two words in this final paragraph that are an example of alliteration.

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- 10 Which word in the final paragraph means ‘people that eat something’?

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Score:

# Answers

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- 1 Used in paragraph 1, what does the phrase 'jump for joy' mean? ☒ To be extremely happy.
- 2 In which country are grasshoppers eaten as a tasty snack? Thailand
- 3 According to the text, which statement is true? ☒ You should not eat worms from your garden.
- 4 According to the text, which statement is true? ☒ If you like shrimp or crab, you may like insects.
- 5 Used in paragraph 3, what does 'demand is growing' mean? ☒ People want to eat more meat.
- 6 Name the greenhouse gas that cows release. methane
- 7 What does the sentence below mean?  
'Our global population is also rising.' ☒ The number of people living on our planet is going up.
- 8 Which statement about edible insects is NOT true? ☒ Edible insects are bad for your immune system.
- 9 Write the two words in this final paragraph that are an example of alliteration. Creepy crawly
- 10 Which word in the final paragraph means 'people that eat something'? Consumers