Engels speech

# Persuasive deel

And that concludes the part where we told you more about the activities. After our week in Germany ended, all the students from all six countries concluded that a future without insects won’t be a very easy one, but most of us already knew that humans aren’t able to live without pollinating insects, what most of us didn’t know before the project was that insects can be a source of protein for us humans.

The most significant benefit of consuming insect-based protein instead of proteins found in other types of meat like poultry, pork and beef. Is the sustainability that comes with it. We will discuss a few different aspects of this sustainability.

The first of which is water usage. For one kilogram of beef meat, 15.5 thousand liters of water are needed. This water is needed not only to quench the cow’s thirst, but the biggest part of it goes into the animal’s feed. Insects are way more efficient at converting food into body mass than any other mammal, bird or fish ever will be.

The second subcategory of the environmental benefits is all about greenhouse gasses. It may not be as well known, but cows and pigs specifically emit a lot of these gasses by breaking wind, the biggest portion of which is methane, a gas that can absorb way more heat than carbon dioxide. Insects almost don’t produce any of these gasses that are disadvantageous in the fight against climate change. By swapping cattle in for crickets, GHG emissions can be significantly lowered.

But apart from sustainability one of the good things about insect consumption is the benefit it has on one’s health. Apart from high protein levels, insects also contain high levels of both iron and calcium. Both of which are vital elements for the human body. Eating insects can also lead to a decreased risk of obesity, this is largely due to their very low fat-content.

Another benefit is the animal welfare situation. A lot of livestock is held in pens that are way to small for them to live good lives. A lot of products claim to be ‘’ecologically justified’’, but a large portion of these claims are either borderline qualifiers or even false. Whilst the existence of insect pain is relatively unknown, scientists suspect that insects don’t experience pain the same way other animals do.

It’s understandable that most people wouldn’t even dare to try a buffalo worm or a whole grasshopper. This is mostly because the food we eat on a daily basis doesn’t show the animal in its entirety. The meat becomes unrecognizable. This is not the case for insects, these critters are simply too small to be consumed in parts. But there are a couple of solutions for this problem. The first of which is the easiest of the two, if we teach our kids to eat insects from a young age, they will never develop the disgust for eating these six-legged creatures. We can see that this works by looking at Asian and African countries, where eating insects is a day-to-day activity.

The second option is to process the insect into a different product, there are already insect-based protein bars on the market. This way the insect won’t be recognizable, and consumers won’t be disgusted by the sight of a fried grasshoppers, head and all.

If all these things are so beneficial to us, then why haven’t we switched to an insect-based diet yet?! The most obvious reason for this is our stubbornness, humans don’t like change at all. And to be honest, the switch will be harder then it sounds. Companies will have to adapt to large-scale insect production, and we don’t really know how that will have to work. It’s easy to see everything through a rose-tinted lens, but the food-production sector won’t be able to switch to insect production from one day to the next. The transition will have to be a slow, experimental process that could take up to a hundred years. Luckily research is already being conducted on the matter and parts of the industry are already trying to make a difference.

All in all, insect consumption can be a sustainable and healthy new way to lead our culinary lives.

Thank you for your attention. If there are any questions left, feel free to ask any of us.

<http://www.fao.org/3/i3253e/i3253e05.pdf>