

Does It Matter Why Our Frogs Are Dying?

A documentary that debuted on PBS earlier this month tells about the death of frogs all around the world and what is contributing. One of our speakers at last week's Earth Day Celebration also talked about the subject. We're talking about it again as the loss of frogs has a much greater impact on our lives and the environment than we may realize.



The following are excerpts from the website for Frogs: The Thin Green Line. The Nature documentary is still being aired on our local PBS channels; check listings. You can also watch the show online. Visit <http://www.pbs.org/> and click on Frogs: The Thin Green Line.

Introduction:

Frogs have been living on this planet for more than 360 million years, and over the centuries, evolved into some of the most wondrous and diverse creatures on earth. Today, however, all their remarkable adaptations and survival tactics are failing them. Recent discoveries are startling: more than a third of all amphibians – most of which are frogs and toads – have already been lost, and more are disappearing every day. It is an environmental crisis unfolding around the globe, traveling from Australia to North and South America. Where the calls of frogs once filled the air, scientists now hear only silence. Ecosystems are beginning to unravel, and the potential to discover important medical cures may be lost forever. Habitat loss, pollution and a human population that has doubled in the past 50 years have set the stage for their diminished numbers.

Frogs may seem small and insignificant, but their bodies may hold the key to important new discoveries in medical research. Scientists are finding that chemical compounds found in frogs' skins can be used to treat pain and block infections, and are even being explored as HIV treatments. Our chances for the discovery of future medical miracles may be slipping away with the disappearance of these tiny creatures in our midst.

Their impact on the world's ecosystems is great. Frogs sit right in the middle of the food chain, and without them, other creatures are disappearing, too. We are only just beginning to understand what life may be like without them.



What You Can Do To Help The Frogs

One of the most important ways to help frogs also helps humans — taking care of the environment. Frogs are particularly susceptible to changes in the environment. Their usually moist skin helps their weak lungs by exchanging oxygen and carbon dioxide with their environment – both in water and out of it.

Reduce chemical use. The water table on which we depend collects a lot of the chemicals we flush down our drains or add to our lawns, despite our best efforts to treat the water.

Don't flush medicines down the toilet. Pesticides degrade water quality, but so do drugs flushed into our environment. The treatment plants that process our wastewater don't always remove pharmaceutical chemicals.

Be Chemical Free!

We can help the frogs and ourselves by reducing the amount of chemicals we use.

The growing consensus among scientists is that small doses of pesticides and other chemicals can cause lasting damage to human health, especially during fetal development and early childhood. Many of our common household cleaning chemicals have been directly linked to asthma and reproductive harm. Check out organizations like [Environmental](#)

Working Group and Women's Voices for the Earth for more information.

There are many Safe Alternatives to these chemical household cleaners! And they do just as good or better at cleaning! We carry many brands, including Ecover and Biokleen.

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Support Family Farms!

Between 2005 and 2006, the US lost 8,900 farms (a little more than 1 farm per hour). Large scale chemical agriculture is poisoning our soils and our water, and weakening our communities. When you're getting food from large operations, it's harder to know how the animals and plants are raised.

That's why we choose to buy from local sources and from companies that support small farmers. We know *our food is raised sustainable and with care*. By keeping family farmers on the land we're protecting our right to choose foods produced in the way we want, ensuring quality, health, humane animal treatment, and the stewardship of the environment.

Here's a couple of the companies we like:

Eden Foods

Eden believes in local first whenever it makes sense, and most ingredients are grown from a few miles to a few hundred miles of Eden's Michigan headquarters. These include organic soybeans, dry beans, cabbage, spelt, apples, tart cherries, strawberries, pastry wheat, and tomatoes. Eden continues to reinforce and build its relations with organic growers and traditional food makers today, nurturing more than 355 family farms with over 79,000 acres of vibrant farm land.

Organic Valley

In an era where corporations dominate all facets of business including government, global energy, agriculture, and global food supply, Organic Valley serves small farmers and rural community health by combining two alternative business models - the family farm and the cooperative. Their cooperative was founded to nurture local communities

by keeping farmers on the land, farming. The central mission of their cooperative is to support rural communities by protecting the health of the family farms - working toward both economic and environmental sustainability.

Heavenly Organics

Their certified 100% organic products are produced by a cooperative of hundreds of organic farms in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains and throughout Northern and Central India. They are dedicated to preserving the traditional lifestyle of these small family owned farms. The families have farmed for generations according to ancient, natural methods that preserve the rich fertile soil and ensure the maximum health-promoting qualities of the food they produce.

