

Cheeseburger-less Paradise

SAVE WATER – STOP EATING!

Looking at the water-footprint of particular crops can quickly lead to a slippery slope of logic. Activists and certain members of the media have lambasted some crops as “too water intensive” in an effort to push the blame of the drought on a particular plant, such as almonds, cotton or alfalfa.

What if they turned that focus on the consumer, rather than the farmer?

Let’s take a look at a classic American meal, a burger and fries.

An average [burger takes 660 gallons of water to produce](#), with much of that water used to yield the 1/3 pound of beef. On top of that, it takes 44 gallons of water to produce a 6 oz. order of fries. 704 gallons of water for every burger and fries ordered at a restaurant!



With 38.8 million people in California, if everyone just skipped one meal next time

they wanted a burger and fries, it would save 27.3 billion gallons of water: roughly enough to supply 650,000 people with household water for a year.

Activists have no problem asking farmers to stop farming, but they have yet to go as far as asking people to stop eating. It’s easy to see where the logic begins to fall apart here. Asking people to forgo meals to help with the drought is ludicrous, but this is exactly what extremists imply when they begin touting the water footprint of certain crops.

The truth is that it takes lots of water to grow food. California’s farmers use water with increasing efficiency to provide food to local communities, the state and the nation. The drought has afflicted farming communities harder than anywhere else. Food lines have tripled in Firebaugh and the towns of Mendota and Huron have seen unemployment rates topping 40 percent!

Operating our water system as effectively and efficiently as possible is a solution. Delivering relief packages for those hit hardest by the drought is a solution. Investing in conveyance and storage projects to alleviate future droughts is a solution. Demonizing the hardworking farm families and farmworkers that feed our state and nation is NOT!