



# Palm Oil

## What is palm oil?

- \*Palm oil (*Elaeis guineensis*) is native to West Africa but around 90% of the world's supply comes from Indonesia and Malaysia.
- \*It is the 2nd most-widely used oil globally, only behind soybean oil.
- \*Palm oil is used in cookies, crackers, dairy products, as well as personal care products like shampoos and cosmetics.
- \*It is a highly saturated fat, and many food companies have been replacing the partially-hydrogenated oils in their food with palm oil because palm oil is trans-fat free.
- \*However, because palm oil is so high in saturated fat, it is not a healthy alternative.
- \*It is sadly also found in some natural and organic markets.



## Global impact?

- \*Sumatra and Borneo are being burned to the ground, releasing so much carbon that Indonesia now ranks only behind China and the U.S. in carbon emissions, and it's not an industrialized nation.
- \*Deforestation alone makes up ~20% of the world's carbon emissions, from logging, slash/burning, and the release of carbon stored in peat swamps.
- \*It is financially cheap to produce but at what cost to the planet and all who share it?
- \*Wild orangutans could become extinct in the next 10 years.
- \*It is estimated that we are losing ~3,000 orangutans every year.
- \*When forests are cleared, starving orangutans in search of food, often find themselves on these plantations.
- \*Adults are shot, beaten, mutilated, or burned on site as "pest control".
- \*Mothers are brutally killed while their babies still cling to their chests.
- \*The babies are then kept or sold in the illegal pet trade.



## What can I do?



- \*Read the labels and become familiar with the products & companies using palm oil.
- \*Write to those companies and ask them to remove palm oil from their products or push for higher standards in sustainability.
- \*Educate yourself and tell your friends, family, and peers.
- \*Avoid products containing palm oil since, for now, there is no reliable standard or guarantee for sustainable palm oil.
- \*Donate to Orangutan Outreach to help protect and care for the great orangutans of Indonesia.



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