**More sustainable barbecues**

Now that it’s summer, many of us will be getting together outdoors for a barbecue.



Here are some tips for a more sustainable barbecue that is also better for your health:

**Type of BBQ**

* Steer clear of throwaway BBQs and disposable plates/utensils. Disposable BBQs have also been linked to some of the more serious UK wildfires.
* ***Grills using natural gas or electricity are generally considered much more environmentally friendly*** *and it has been estimated that their carbon footprint is* ***one******third*** *of a charcoal one.*
* If this isn’t possible, go for an egg-shaped, ceramic Kamado-style BBQ as it needs less charcoal because its shape helps maintain higher levels of heat. This also means it uses less fuel.

**Fuel and lighters**

* If you use charcoal, ***choose sustainably sourced charcoal which isn’t linked to mass deforestation in developing countries***. Alternatively, try other green options such as coconut shell, bamboo or briquettes made from agricultural waste and clay.
* Conventional charcoal bricks are comprised of wood by-products, sawdust, and lighter fluid. These bricks often release volatile compounds (VOCs) into the atmosphere as they burn, which can be inhaled and also contaminate your food (5).
* Use wood-based firelighters and avoid petroleum-based lighter fluids and self-lighting charcoal.

**Cooking**

* Avoid pre-packaged meat and buy meat or fish from local, sustainable producers (pasture/grass fed) instead
* Trim the fat off meat – this reduces the amount of smoke (and VOCs) produced
* For an even healthier BBQ, try some vegetarian or even vegan options: (<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/vegetarian-barbecue-recipes>)
* Plan your cooking times in advance so that you only pre-heat the grill for as long as needed

**After the BBQ**

Finally, clean out your grill **while it is still hot** when you’ve finished cooking. A build-up of grease and food particles in your grill will produce unnecessary smoke (and VOCs). Use a mixture of water and baking soda to clean off the cooking grates and don’t forget to clean out grease drip trays under your grill.

**For a good overview and more tips**, see <https://www.countryandtownhouse.com/food-and-drink/sustainable-barbecue-guide/> and <https://eco-age.com/resources/bbq-season-sustainably/>