

Theme 4 "At home"
interview with
Dr Angelina Frankowska



TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CLIMATE CHANGE

#TakeABiteAtHome

AT HOME



INTRODUCING...

Hi, I'm Angelina, and I do research on environmental impacts of making and eating food, including the climate change impacts from home cooking.

INTERVIEW

Last week we learned that to help with climate change we need to pay attention to what food we buy, and when. Does the way we cook at home also contribute to climate change?

Yes, cooking food also has an impact on climate change. Cooking food for a long time will use more energy, which contributes to climate change if it comes from burning fossil fuels. Sometimes food doesn't need to be cooked for as long as you think (but always make sure food is safe to eat!). Also, some ways of cooking heat up your kitchen as well as cooking the food, which can be a waste of energy. For example, it sometimes takes much less energy to boil food on the hob compared to baking or roasting in the oven.

We also learned that beans are a climate-friendly food. Could you share with us your favourite recipe for homemade baked beans?

I like my food with lots of flavour, for example adding some smoked paprika gives a spicy and interesting flavour, as in this recipe:
<https://tinyurl.com/yc9dktrz>

What are the cooking appliances that cause less climate change?

Many ovens and hobs burn gas, which is usually mostly a fossil fuel, and so contributes to climate change. If you use electrical devices then the energy can instead come from renewable sources. Electrical appliances that you can plug into the wall generally use less electricity than a big metal oven.

What are the least climate-friendly ways to cook in the UK? If we think of a food item, like potatoes, how much does cooking add to climate change?

Using the oven is the least climate-friendly way to cook. We estimated that two thirds of the climate impact of a roast potato come from using the oven, whereas using a microwave to cook potatoes causes about ten times less climate change than using the oven.

SO, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

- Cooking vegetables in a microwave oven is better for the climate than using an oven.
- If you still want things browned then you can help the climate by cooking them in the microwave first and then using the oven just for a short time to make them crispier.
- If you have a pressure cooker or slow cooker, experiment with trying out some new recipes!

PROFILE

Angelina holds a degree in chemical engineering. She does research at the University of Manchester on sustainable food production and consumption by applying life cycle thinking to assess environmental impacts of the whole food supply chain. Her research interests also include the food-energy-water nexus, sustainable diets and health impacts of food systems.

