

Vegan Education in Schools

Case study of speciesism

Questioning meat - ethics, justice and the future

Years 7 to 12

Lesson 9: Countering pro-meat propaganda and misinformation

Overview: This lesson explores how the meat industry spreads misinformation to maintain consumer support and block progress toward animal agriculture abolition. Students will examine common pro-meat arguments, including claims about nutrition, sustainability and economics, and learn how to fact-check and counter these misleading narratives. The lesson will also explore the role of corporate lobbying, media manipulation and industry-funded research in shaping public perception.

Objective: Equip students with the skills to critically analyse and counteract the misinformation spread by the meat industry to justify its continued existence.

Outcomes:

- Students will identify and analyse common pro-meat arguments and misinformation strategies.
- Students will evaluate industry-funded research and its role in shaping public perception.
- Students will develop counterarguments based on scientific evidence and ethical reasoning.
- Students will create educational materials to debunk myths about animal agriculture.

Materials:

- Videos:
 - [How the meat industry spreads misinformation](#) - Sentient
 - [EXPOSED: Meat Industry Payola To Anti Vegans Influencers!](#) - Happy Healthy Vegan
 - [The Lies, Myths & Misinformation Of Animal Agriculture](#) - Plant Base News
 - [The Meat Industry's Shocking Plot to Brainwash Consumers Exposed](#) - Joey Carbstrong
 - [Industry-funded research: How corporations manipulate science](#) - Tedx
 - [How BIG MEAT and DAIRY Fooled You \(With Lies and Propaganda\)](#) - Live Kindly

- Articles:
 - [How the meat industry influences media and policy](#) - Carbon Upfront
 - [Pro-meat misinformation rife on social media](#) - The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
 - [Inside big beef's climate messaging machine: confuse, defend and downplay](#) - The Guardian
 - [The myth that meat is essential for human health could harm us all](#) - Salon
 - [Why you should go animal-free: 18 arguments for eating meat debunked](#) - The Guardian
 - [The 7 Myths of Big Meat's Marketing](#) - Greenpeace
 - [The environmental cost of animal agriculture](#) - IAPWA
- Case studies:
 - Analysis of meat industry-funded nutritional studies vs independent research
 - Pro-meat lobbying efforts in government policymaking
 - The role of advertising in shaping meat consumption habits
- Handouts:
 - List of common pro-meat myths vs scientifically backed counterarguments
 - A guide to identifying misinformation and evaluating sources

Lesson steps:

1. Introduction (10 minutes):

- Ask students: "Where do most people get their information about food and nutrition?"
- Discuss the power of advertising, government policy and industry-backed science.
- Introduce the focus of the lesson: exposing and countering meat industry propaganda.

2. Common pro-meat myths (20 minutes):

- Present common claims used to justify meat consumption, such as "humans need meat for protein" and "meat is part of a sustainable food system".
- Show an infographic breaking down these myths with scientific counterarguments.
- Discuss why these arguments persist and who benefits from them.

3. Industry-funded research and corporate influence (20 minutes):

- Show video on corporate manipulation of science ([Industry-funded research: How corporations manipulate science](#)).
- Case study: Comparison of meat industry-funded studies vs independent research on health impacts.
- Discuss how misleading studies are used to shape policy and public perception.

4. Media manipulation and lobbying (20 minutes):

- Show video on the meat industry's influence on media ([EXPOSED: Meat Industry Payola To Anti Vegans Influencers!](#), [The Meat Industry's Shocking Plot to Brainwash Consumers Exposed](#)).
- Case study: How advertising normalises meat consumption and marginalises vegan diets.
- Discuss lobbying tactics used to suppress anti-meat policies.

5. How to counter misinformation (20 minutes):

- Introduce fact-checking techniques and how to identify biased research.
- Guide students in crafting concise, evidence-based counterarguments.
- Practice exercise: Debating pro-meat statements using factual evidence.

6. Creating educational content (15 minutes):

- Assign students to create posters, social media posts or videos debunking common pro-meat myths.
- Discuss the importance of accessible, engaging activism.
- Showcase successful campaigns that have effectively countered industry propaganda.

7. Class discussion and reflection (10 minutes):

- Ask students: "What is the most effective way to challenge misinformation?"
- Discuss how individuals and organisations can promote truth in media and policy.
- Encourage students to think about how they can apply these skills in everyday discussions.

Homework:

- Write a 500-word essay analysing a pro-meat argument and constructing a counterargument using scientific and ethical evidence.
- Research a case where the meat industry influenced policy or public perception and present findings in class.
- Create a fact-checking guide or infographic debunking common meat industry myths.

Differentiation:

- Provide simplified explanations of industry-funded research for students needing extra support.
- Allow students to create a short video or social media post instead of writing an essay.
- Encourage advanced students to explore legal and economic factors that enable misinformation campaigns.
- Use small group debates for students who prefer verbal expression over written assignments.

Assessment criteria:

- Participation in discussions and ability to critically assess industry propaganda.
- Depth of research and analysis in homework assignments.
- Engagement with fact-checking and counter-misinformation strategies.
- Critical thinking demonstrated in class debates and presentations.