

## Palm Oil Outline

Specific Goal: To inform the class about palm oil.

Proposition: The production of palm oil has many negative consequences and rampant production should be slowed down to change the impact on the planet.

### Introduction

- I. Maybe this has happened to you: a little girl, wearing a big grin, comes up to you and asks, "Would you like to buy some cookies?"
- II. It's hard to say "no" to this pint size saleswomen, so inevitably you say, "yes": "yes" to dreams, "yes" to hopes, and unbeknownst to you, "yes" to rainforest deforestation.
- III. Today, many supermarket products contain a deceptively harmless sounding ingredient known as palm oil.
- IV. As a lover of both the environment and food, it is disturbing to hear that common products that I eat or use play a role in the destruction of some of the most beautiful and important places on earth.
- V. The production of palm oil has many negative consequences and rampant production should be slowed down to change the impact on the planet.

Transition: We shall now explore dark side of palm oil production.

### Need

- I. Palm oil's success has many negative consequences.
  - A) Its economic value creates conflicts.
    - 1) In a 2009 Mother Jones article titled, "Slash and Burn: how biofuels could destroy the planet even faster than petroleum," Heather Rogers writes about an indigenous Indonesian tribe, the Dayak, whom discovered that "a company was seizing...ancestral land to establish a massive [oil palm plantation]" (pg 40).
    - 2) "[Over a period of 2 years, the company destroyed] 15000 acres [of] land that's vital for [the Dayak] survival" (IBID)
    - 3) In a 2009 article titled "Palm Oil" found in World Watch by Ben Block notes "violent conflicts between oil palm estates and villager [went] from nearly 200 in 2004 to 514 in 2007" (pg 1).
  - B) In addition to social conflicts, palm oil plantation expansion creates environmental problems.
    - 1) The Economist in a 2010 article titled, "The Other Oil spill" noted that, "between 1967 and 2000 the area in cultivation in Indonesia expanded from less than 200 square kilometers to more than 30000 km" (pg1).
    - 2) "By 2022 most of the country's forest will be destroyed" (IBID).
    - 3) According to Carolyn Fry in a 2011 article titled, "Slipping away from palm oil" found in Engineering and Technology that this

process “exacerbate[s] climate change by releasing carbon dioxide” (pg 68), pg 69).

Transition: Now that we learned a little bit about the problems associated with palm oil production; let us see why we should consider a boycott.

#### Satisfaction

- I. We should examine how we can slow down the production process.
  - A) Reducing our demand will slow down plantation growth.
    - 1) The economist in a 2010 article notes “50% of all packaged supermarket goods [contain palm oil]” (IBID, pg 1).
    - 2) As Stephanie R. Kinnon points out in a 2008 article titled, “Too good to be true? The problem With Palm Oil” found in Alive: Canadian Journal of Health and Nutrition, “ Bake homemade cookies and treats instead of buying commercially prepared treats” (pg2).
    - 3) Carolyn Fry in a 2011 Engineering and Technology article titled, “Slipping away from Palm Oil” notes “palm oil... is often lumped together with other oils in ingredient lists as ‘vegetable oil’” (pg 71)
  - B) Reducing our demand for palm oil is one way to protect the forests, but there are also other solutions to abate the destruction.
    - 1) As Richard Stone in a 2007 article, found in Science magazine, titled “Can Palm Oil Plantation come clean?” notes “[in Malaysia] plantations are... allowed to expand only into existing agricultural fields or degraded land” (pg1)
    - 2) William Laurance in a 2006 New Scientist article titled, “The Value of Trees” argues for “Carbon Credits...[to pay] countries in the tropics not to cut down their trees” (pg1)
    - 3) Carolyn Fry in her 2011 article also notes “[that algal] has the potential to replace palm oil” (IBID, pg 71)

Transition: After taking action to reduce our demand for palm oil and plantation expansion, let’s look at what can happen as a result.

#### Visualization

- II. Palm oil will not go away entirely immediately; let’s explore how we might change the impact on the planet.
  - A) Palm oil is an important source of income.
    - 1) The Economist notes “palm oil has contributed to economic growth in the countries that produce it” (pg 1).
    - 2) [Indonesia and Malaysia] produce 90% of the world’s palm oil” (IBID)
  - B) The benefits palm oil can bring are outweighed by the consequences.
    - 1) According to a 2009 World Watch article titled “Palm Oil” written by Ben Block “When each hectare of carbon-rich tropical

- peatland is drained for oil palm production, an estimated 3750-5400 tons of Carbon dioxide are released over 25 years” (pg 1)
- 2) “Yet new plantations can still clear forests not deemed ‘high-value’ for conservation- a term that remains largely undefined” (IBID)

Transition: Finally, let us look at the activities I urge to do to bring about change to this vital issue.

#### Action

- I. I hope by discussing the problems of palm oil production you now realize that it is a serious problem that must be solved.
- II. Please follow these requests:
  - A. I urge all you to boycott products that state they contain palm oil until it can be produced in a sustainable manner.
  - B. And if you would like to take further action to protect the forests please visit [arborday.org](http://arborday.org) to learn about volunteer opportunities.
  - C. Read a health conscious cookbook on substitutes you can use in place of oil in your recipes.
- III. It’s important to say, “yes” to dreams and “yes to hopes but it’s also important to say “no” to deforestation. When you think back to the little girl selling cookies what will you do?

## References

Block, B. (2009) Palm Oil. *World Watch*

Economist (2010) The Other Oil Spill. *Economist*, 71-73

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