

Why save water this hot summer and how

Social Desk

EXCLUSIVE

As the summer heat intensifies, Iran grapples with an escalating water crisis, exacerbated by increased consumption and dwindling resources. The situation has reached a critical juncture, with the country's water reserves hitting alarmingly low levels.

In the past fortnight, parts of Tehran experienced water outages due to flooding and mudslides at the Karaj Dam, which obstructed the water supply. The disruption underscored the vulnerability of a system that many take for granted, expecting high-pressure, clear water to flow from their faucets at any given moment.

The reality, however, is that water is a finite resource, originating not from faucets but from nature. The thought of homes without water for even a few hours is distressing, yet it is a stark reality for millions worldwide who grapple with water scarcity. Many have endured prolonged water outages, relying on tankers and water tanks for their daily needs.

Drought and reduced rainfall have plagued many regions, including Iran, while indiscriminate exploitation of water resources has threatened the sustainability of freshwater reserves. The result is a landscape marred by dried-up and

polluted rivers, lakes, and wetlands, and the continued destruction of watersheds and water resources. This environmental degradation not only threatens biodiversity but also pushes various animal and plant species towards extinction. Statistics reveal an alarming 83 percent decrease in the population of freshwater species globally since 1970. These species play a crucial role in the maintaining health of freshwater ecosystems and enhancing their resilience to climate change.

Despite the scarcity of freshwater, consumption patterns suggest a lack of awareness of its finite nature. Tehran's water consumption has hit a record high of 50,000 liters per second, a 4,000-liter increase from the previous year. However, a 10 percent reduction in water usage could ensure a comfortable summer for the city's residents. Given the dire situation we're in water-wise, here are 10 simple yet effective ways for us to help save water in our daily lives this hot summer:

Fix leaks promptly

A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 75 liters of water per day, while larger leaks can waste more than 500 liters. Therefore, it is essential to fix leaks as soon as they are detected. Regularly check your pipes and faucets for leaks and get

them repaired promptly.

Install water-saving appliances

Consider investing in water-efficient appliances such as high-efficiency washing machines and dishwashers. These appliances use significantly less water than their standard counterparts. Also, consider installing low-flow showerheads and dual-flush toilets, which can significantly reduce your water usage.

Use water wisely in the kitchen

Be mindful of your water usage when washing dishes. Instead of letting the water run while you wash, fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water. Also, consider using a dishwasher, which typically uses less water than washing dishes by hand.

Limit your shower time

A standard showerhead uses 10 liters of water per minute. By reducing your shower time by just a few minutes, you can save a significant amount of water. Also, consider turning off the water while you lather up.

Water plants wisely

Water your plants during the early morning or late evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation. Also, consider using a soaker hose or drip irrigation system, which delivers water directly to the plant's roots, reducing water waste.



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Collect rainwater

Install a rain barrel to collect rainwater, which can be used to water your plants, wash your car, or even flush your toilets. This not only saves water but also reduces the amount of stormwater runoff, which can lead to erosion and pollution.

Reuse greywater

Greywater is the relatively clean wastewater from baths, sinks, washing machines, and other kitchen appliances. It can be reused for activities like watering gardens, significantly reducing your freshwater usage.

Educate yourself and others

Knowledge is power. The more you know about the importance of water conservation, the more likely you are to make changes in your daily habits. Share your knowledge with others and encourage them to save water too.

Be mindful of your consumption

Every product we consume requires water to produce. By being mindful of our consumption and reduc-

ing waste, we can indirectly save water. For example, it takes 9000 liters of water to produce one pound of beef, so reducing meat consumption can save a significant amount of water.

Advocate for water conservation policies

Support local, national, and international policies that promote water conservation. This could include policies that encourage the use of water-efficient appliances, regulate industrial water use, or protect natural water sources.

Water conservation is not just about saving water; it's about ensuring a sustainable future for ourselves and generations to come. By implementing these simple yet effective strategies, we can all play a part in preserving this precious resource. Remember, every drop counts.

The current crisis underscores the urgent need for sustainable water management and conservation efforts. As the summer heat continues to rise, so does the urgency to address this pressing issue.

Risk of simultaneous crop failures worldwide underestimated

The risks of harvest failures in multiple global breadbaskets have been underestimated, according to a study in which researchers said should be a "wake up call" about the threat climate change poses to our food systems. Food production is both a key source of planet-warming emissions and highly exposed to the effects of climate change, with climate and crop models used to figure out just what the impacts could be as the world warms, AFP reported.

In the new research published in Nature Communications, researchers in the United States and Germany looked at the likelihood that several major food producing regions could simultaneously suffer low yields.

These events can lead to price spikes, food insecurity and even civil unrest, said lead author Kai Kornhuber, a researcher at Columbia University and the German Council on Foreign Relations.



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By "increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases, we are entering this uncharted water where we are struggling to really have an accurate idea of what type of extremes we're going to face," he told the media.

"We show that these types of concurring events are really largely underestimated."

The study looked at observational and climate model data between 1960 and 2014, and then at projections for 2045 to 2099. Researchers first looked at the impact of the jet stream - the air currents that drive weather patterns in many of the world's most important crop producing regions.

They found that a "strong meandering" of the jet stream, flowing in big wave shapes, has particularly significant impacts on key agricultural regions in North America, Eastern Europe and East Asia, with a reduction in harvests of up to seven percent.

The researchers also found that this had been linked to simultaneous crop failures in the past. One example was in 2010, when the fluctuations of the jet stream were linked to both extreme heat in parts of Russia and devastating floods in Pakistan, which both hurt crops, Kornhuber said.

Iran's 10-year document on food and nutrition security announced

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Iran's Supreme Council of Health and Food Security (SCHFS) has announced the completion and approval of the national document on food and nutrition security for the years 2023-2033. The announcement was made during the council's 17th session, said Zahra Abdollahi, the head of SCHFS' food security and nutrition policy coordination group.

The document was prepared in the secretariat of the Supreme Council of Health and Food Security and was approved on April 20, 2023, as per the Ministry of Health's announcement, ISNA reported. Abdollahi made the announcement during a virtual meeting that focused on the global and national trends of food and nutrition security. The meeting was attended by heads and experts from health and

food security secretariats of universities, faculties of medical sciences, and officials of health secretaries of executive bodies and organizations across the country.

During the meeting, Abdollahi highlighted the increasing trend of food insecurity worldwide due to political tensions and economic shocks, including the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. She noted the impact of

job losses and reduced income, particularly in low-income communities, disruptions in the food supply chain, and fluctuations in food prices.

Abdollahi also drew attention to such crises as drought, decreased rainfall, floods, storms, sanctions, and reduced imports in countries that rely on food, energy, and agricultural imports. She emphasized the reduction in access to food due to price increases

and a decrease in humanitarian food aid, as well as food waste and losses globally.

Citing reports from the Food Agriculture and Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization, Abdollahi warned that if countries do not implement timely interventions and programs to improve food security, the trend of malnutrition and hunger worldwide will increase.

Iran's Leader has also emphasized the importance of food security and ensuring that all sections of society have access to an adequate, nutritious, and healthy food basket. President Seyyed Ebrahim Raesi during the 16th session of the Supreme Council of Health and Food Security, prioritized the development of a national and comprehensive document on food and nutrition security with the participation of all relevant executive bodies.

The 10-year national document outlines strategies, actions, and programs in various areas of food and nutrition security. These include food production and supply, physical and economic access to food for community members, meeting nutritional needs, and maintaining and improving the nutritional health of vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating mothers, children, adolescents, and the elderly. The document also addresses food health and safety and assigns tasks to each of the relevant institutions and scientific and research centers of the country. The secretariat of the Supreme Council of Health and Food Safety, based on its legal duties, will monitor the implementation of the national document through the specialized working group of food safety and nutrition and related technical committees.



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