

Food

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body and produce energy, maintain life, or stimulate growth. Food is usually of plant or animal origin, and contains essential nutrients, such as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, or minerals. Some foods (not from animal or plant sources) include various edible fungi, especially mushrooms. Today, most of the food energy consumed by the world population is supplied by the food industry. Fungi and bacteria are used in the preparation of fermented and pickled foods like leavened bread, alcoholic drinks, cheese, pickles, kombucha, and yogurt. Inorganic substances such as salt, baking soda and cream of tartar are used to preserve or chemically alter an ingredient.

Most food has its origin in plants. Seeds of plants are a good source of food for animals, including humans, because they contain many healthful fats, such as Omega fats. Edible seeds include cereals (maize, wheat, rice, etc.), legumes /*strukovina – luštěnina*/ (beans, peas, lentils), and nuts.

Oilseeds are often pressed to produce rich oils. Fruits make up a significant part of the diets of most cultures. Some botanical fruits, such as tomatoes, pumpkins, and eggplant, are eaten as vegetables. Vegetables include root vegetables (potatoes and carrots), bulbs (onion family), leaf vegetables (spinach and lettuce), stem vegetables (bamboo shoots and asparagus), and inflorescence vegetables (globe artichokes and broccoli and other vegetables such as cabbage or cauliflower).

Animals are used as food either directly (meat) or indirectly (products – milk, eggs, honey). Some people do not consume meat or animal food products for cultural, dietary, health, ethical, or ideological reasons. Vegetarians choose to give up food from animal sources to varying degrees.

Vegans do not consume any foods that contain ingredients from an animal source.

Animals, specifically humans, have five different types of taste: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami (the Japanese word for delicious – it is

characterized as savoury /*pikantný – pikantní*/, meaty, and rich in flavour). The tastes that provide the most energy (sugar and fats) are the most pleasant to eat, while others, such as bitter tastes, are not enjoyable. Water generally has no taste.

Many cultures have a recognizable cuisine, i.e., a specific set of cooking traditions using various spices or a combination of flavours unique to that culture. Popular types of ethnic foods include Italian, French, Japanese, Chinese, American, Thai, and Indian cuisine. Food presented in a clean and appetizing way will encourage people to consume it. A common saying is that people "eat with their eyes."

While many foods can be eaten raw, many also undergo some form of preparation. This may involve washing, cutting, trimming, mixing, heating or cooling, pressure cooking, fermentation, combination with another food, or adding other foods or ingredients, such as spices. In a home, most food preparation takes place in the kitchen. In restaurants, trained chefs prepare food, and trained waiters serve the customers.

Dietary habits play a significant role in the health and mortality of all humans. Imbalances between the consumed fuels and expended energy result in either starvation, often connected with famine, or malnutrition. Poor intake of various vitamins and minerals can lead to diseases that can have far-reaching effects on health. Deficiencies, excesses, and imbalances in diet may lead to various health problems such as scurvy /*skorbut*/, obesity, or osteoporosis, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases as well as psychological and behavioral problems. The science of nutrition attempts to understand how and why specific dietary aspects influence health.

Answer the questions:

What is your favourite kind of food?

Are you afraid of genetically modified food?

What are some disgusting things that people eat?

What restaurants in your area would you recommend?

How do you feel about cooking?

In what ways is climate change affecting our diet?

Is it a good thing that seasonal foods in our country are now available all year round because they can be grown in far-away countries and flown here?