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Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.

Why We Eat the Foods We Do¹

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Did you ever wonder why you enjoy certain foods and your friends or colleagues seem to have completely different tastes? Have you ever traveled to countries where foods are eaten that you find repulsive? There are good reasons for these differences in food choices among people.

Although biological differences such as food allergies can affect our choices, it's primarily our culture and family traditions that determine the foods we eat. Cultural values dictate what is desirable or undesirable as food, and even the type and amount of food that's offered to guests.

People develop beliefs about food within their particular culture, but these beliefs may or may not be based on scientific facts. It's a good idea, then, to be aware of beliefs that you may have about foods from your childhood and to determine if they fit with current knowledge about healthy eating.

Food patterns are part of the social norms that parents teach their children. We let our children know which foods are suitable for meals, snacks, or "company" meals, and what foods are not okay to eat at all. We also influence eating habits, not always in positive ways. (Remember the "clean plate club" that we now know can cause children to overeat?)

1. This document is FAR8021, one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. First published January 2008. Reviewed March 2011. In the interest of time or clarity, the broadcast version of this script may have been modified. Please visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Food patterns and eating habits may be passed from generation to generation. Many of them we should treasure, and others we may want to leave behind.

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To listen to the radio broadcast:

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/whyeat.mp3

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/whyeat.wav

References

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