

**Food Studies
Teach Yourself Series**

Topic 4 : Food in Australia – Food Trends (Unit 1)

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Food in Australia

Numerous forms dedicate food trends and fads, each has its own target market and many overlap, which leads to confusion of the information, supplied particularly when it comes to fad diets and exploring different eating cultures. Food in Australia is influenced by many factors, throughout this unit students will develop an understanding of those influences and the effect of them on themselves, family and society as a whole.

Food trends

As it appears in Unit 1

In this area of study students focus on the history and culture of food in Australia. They look at indigenous food prior to European settlement and the attempts of the first non-indigenous settlers to establish a secure and sustainable food supply. Students consider the development of food production, processing and manufacturing industries and conduct a critical inquiry into how Australian food producers and consumers today have been influenced by immigration and other cultural factors. Students conduct research into foods and food preparation techniques introduced by immigrants over time and consider the resurgence in interest in indigenous food practices, while reflecting on whether Australia has developed a distinctive cuisine of its own. The practical component complements the study of ingredients indigenous to Australia and provides students with opportunities to extend and share their research into a selected cuisine brought by migrants.

Patterns in the global spread of food production and the growth of trade in food commodities such as grains, tea, coffee, chocolate, salt, spices and sugar and how food trends and fads have effected these requirements. Trends in food practices and food subcultures in contemporary Australia, such as emerging food movements and changing social behaviours relating to food.

Review Questions

How do you define the moment when something officially qualifies as a trend? There's a fine line between a trend and a fad. Trends are longer-lasting and more impactful. They stay on even after it stops being the thing that *Bon Appétit* and every other food publication writes about. Think about extra virgin olive oil—with the gourmards it hit big in the late '70s, early '80s, and it trickled down to everyone else in the '90s. It became the "thing." Now it's not a trend, nobody really talks about it. But it's the default oil. It becomes a part of your eating culture. Trends do that. Fads don't. Fads are the 'Cronut' of the season.

Could food trends happen without food media? Food trends have happened and will continue to happen with or without the food media. If you think about the fondue trend or muffins, somebody would have "invented" it or opened up a store or been at a restaurant and they would have heard about it. Maybe the local paper would have covered it, and another paper would have eventually picked up the story and done their own version of it, and it would have trickled its way up to a national magazine. Maybe the *New York Times* would have done a piece. But that would have taken the process of years, decades, two decades. The difference now is that the 21st-century food media is an unprecedented food creature in its breadth and its scope and its speed. The Cronut is the most beautiful example. It went from an item to a food trend—or fad—instantly, and it was entirely because of the media. The speed of trends, the cycle of trends, and the volume of their impact is exacerbated by the food media.

<http://www.bonappetit.com/entertaining-style/trends-news/article/food-trends-david-sax>

1. Food trends are defining many of our eating habits and in turn our nutritional intake.

a. Define the term food trend.

b. Social media and celebrity chefs often instigate food trends. Discuss a food trend that you have seen be influenced by these.

c. Explain a current food trend that can have an adverse effect on the follower's nutritional intake.

Better known as algae or seaweed, kelp is now being touted as the latest nutritional powerhouse and is set to take over from kale as the trendy new ingredient to add to your diet. The vitamin-packed seaweed is not only a concentrated source of calcium and iodine, it has also been found to have natural antioxidant properties. Geeta Sidhu Robb, nutritionist and founder of Nosh Detox has been using kelp for some time now as it has some superior properties compared to kale. In fact Ms Sidhu-Robb said that it's kelp's high iodine content which makes it one of the best foods around. According to Ms Sidhu-Robb, nearly 70% of UK women are said to be iodine deficient. She told Femail: 'Kelp has iodine, because only ocean products contain iodine. Iodine nourishes the thyroid gland, the powerhouse of the metabolism. It's the one thing that most people have out of balance when fatigued. 'Kelp and kale are different as they do different things,' she continued. 'But it does have iodine which kale doesn't and magnesium and calcium which kale does. 'So if you take kelp it does have everything in it.' Kelp has been around for a while and is often taken by people 'in the know'. It is certainly getting more popular with the general public,' head nutritionist at NutriCentre, Shona Wilkinson said. 'Because kelp grows in a nutrient-rich water, it is packed full of nutrients,' she continued. The seaweed is a natural source of vitamins and mineral and is particularly high in calcium. Ms Wilkinson explained: 'It is a natural source of vitamins A, B1, B2, C, D and E as well as minerals including zinc, iodine, magnesium, iron, potassium, copper and is especially high in calcium. 'It is also very high in iodine. We need iodine for efficient thyroid and pituitary function. The thyroid is responsible for regulating metabolism and body temperature. 'For this reason many people take kelp to help with weight control. Kelp is also known as a natural diuretic and is thought to be good for those troubled with water retention.' Natalie Alexander Bio-Synergy ambassador said: 'Kelp is known for its detoxifying

properties, whilst also containing a rich source of concentrated minerals and trace elements, which help with the efficient running of our body.' And not only is this super plant good for you, it's great for the environment as well as it has the ability to grow without fresh water or land. And when it does grow in water, it cleans the water by soaking up excess phosphorus and nitrogen. Ms Sidhu-Robb explained: 'It's also the fastest growing plant in the world so much more sustainable.

'It has a complete nutrient profile so it can heal the world.' But while it's been hailed as the next big thing, Ms Wilkinson is wary of describing it as a 'superfood'. She said: 'The term 'superfood' isn't really an official term so it's difficult to say whether it counts as a superfood or not but it is certainly as good way of getting all your nutrients in one place.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/food/article-3007359/First-wheatgrass-kale-s-KELP-seaweed-superfood-table.html#ixzz4YSaqZAO6>

Review Questions

2. Food trends often come into the market and become extremely popular before being replaced with another alternative.

a. Kale was a huge food trend; investigate how kale became so popular and its nutritional benefit.

b. Seaweed is now the new kale; discuss the use of seaweed in our diets and its benefits.

Solutions to Review Questions

1.

- a.** Is when a food gains popularity due to celebrity endorsement, or because it seems it is something that everyone is eating and should be eating. A trend can be the produce, the way it is prepared or the way it is presented.
- b.** There are many responses possible, however the trend must have influenced Australian food culture, and explain how it has and how it has evolved from a previous method or traditional food and its use now.

One of the main food trends over the last few years was the use of the sous-vide style of cooking, which is a method of cooking food that is sealed in an airtight bag and then placed in a bath of temperature controlled water. This method of cooking is to ensure that the food cooked evenly without overcooking the outside and retaining all the foods natural moisture. Although it is not a common method, it was originally used in 1799 in France, and has close ties with the cooking style of poaching. The use of this method until recently was for high ended gourmet kitchens however recently sous-vide machine are available for home use.

- c.** There are numerous responses however the negative impacts on the consumers in tale of nutrition must be mentioned.

Recently the Paleo diet was endorsed by some celebrity chefs and knocked by others, which brought into the media often. The negative implications of this trend are the healthy eating guide recommends consumption of a variety of healthy foods from each of the food groups. The Paleo diet removes all grains and dairy from the diet. It is a high protein, high fat and low carbohydrate diet.

2.

- a.** Kale has been used in many reality food shows, which started the trend in Australia, which was closely followed by a significant amount available in supermarkets. Kale is low in kJ, high in fibre and has zero fat, it has significant positive impact on digestion and is filled with nutrients, vitamins and folate. It was advertised as a “super food”, and was used in many different formats.
- b.** Seaweed has the nutrient content of kale but it also has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and recent studies have shown it may influence the possible reduction of breast cancer risk.

Recipes – Green Nori Salad (basically the seaweed replaces the kale), a variety of stews and soups.

3.

- a. Vegetarians have different classifications- Lacto who eat fruit and vegetables as well as dairy products, Lacto-ovo vegetarian are the same as Lacto with the addition of eggs. Pesco don't eat meat and poultry however eat fish, eggs and dairy products, a flexitarian is someone who will eat vegetarian apart from once or twice a week so as they receive the healthy benefits of both. Over the past few years' vegetarian numbers have increased significantly with the global focus on sustainability and the environment it has made it even more popular. Vegetarians gain their nutritional requirements as long as they consume a variety of alternatives in the food groups they exclude. It is described as a way of life not a diet.
- b. The Paleo diet excludes grains and dairy from the diet, being known as the caveman diet. By excluding these foods it is said that you are eating a clean diet without additives, preservatives and chemicals, the benefits from the nutrients of the foods consumed will cover all the bodies' needs. By eating more red meat you receive more iron. Being endorsed by celebrity chefs saw the popularity increase significantly however this also meant closer investigation of its claims- which were rebutted and now the diet is not heard about as often.
- c. A vegan eats no animal products – meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy and their by products are all excluded. Vegans describe this as a way of life and a choice they have made. With the current focus of sustainability and negative effects on the earth due to food production vegans often look for the organic and natural options. Diet wise there are a lot of nutrients that are excluded from their diets and the replacements should be closely monitored to ensure no future negative effects.
- d. Atkins Diet is a low carb diet and describes the benefits as being better cognitive function, helps fight cancer, better digestion and fewer cravings and not going hungry. Once on the Atkins diet the body's metabolism switches from burning glucose to burning stored fat thereby increasing weight loss. The Atkins Diet was originally developed in the 1970s and gained huge popularity, it was one of the first fad diets, however while others have come and gone it keeps coming back at different times. The diet had major restrictions and was shown to have adverse health effects over time due to the lack of certain nutrients.
- e. The Dukan Diet is a high protein, low carbohydrate way of eating. This had four phases the first phase was the dieter eats as much protein as they want, second eats protein and vegetables, third phase the dieter added 3 teaspoons of oats everyday, to exercise and one day a week only eat protein. While following this diet there will be weight loss, however only because of lowering kJ in take significantly. The diet like the Atkins diet is very restrictive and in take of all the nutrients required will be difficult and adversely affect the body over time.

4.

- a. A food fad tends to make promises of health advantages, is often endorsed by a celebrity. Makes a quick big impact on the market and then disappears almost as quickly.
A food trend is a food, a preparation method, a processing method – tends to gradually enter and increase popularity over time, the time line can be a variant.
The difference is one enters the market quickly without backing and scientific proof due to endorsement or media enhancement, the other gradually enters the market and increases in popularity.
- b. The food trend of prepackaged foods is impacting the amount of salt and nutrients being consumed which is causing many health concerns.
Increased amount of fad diets being followed leading to nutritional in take concerns and yo-yoing of weight loss.

Increased amount of take away food consumed, thereby increasing the intake of fats and a lack of intake of fresh unprocessed foods increasing rates of obesity and heart disease. However the trend of more vegetarians does by increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables eaten. Consumption of healthy snacks is assisted by the new product ranges of nutritional healthy alternatives now available – chips with reduced fats, dried vegetable nibbles.

5.

- a. Is defined as the amount of productive land appropriated on average by each person for transport, water, housing, waste and food.
- b. The risks with importing foods is biosecurity for the importing country, also the exporting country may not have the strict control that Australia have on the use of herbicides and pesticides. Local produce the source is known and the controls are in place to ensure the food is safe for human consumption.
- c. With the changing patterns of Australian eating patterns and tastes food producers have needed to adapt their produce; imported goods have also affected this. The producers need to be able to compete with imported products for price and quality and also to increase yield due to the increase population size. Depending on their produce popularity they may need to adapt their products to suit the consumer's requirements.
- d. Food trends are often focused on new or imported goods that Australian farmers do not produce. Also a food trend often means a steady incline in the amount of produce needed, this may put more pressure on the farmers to supply more quickly.

6.

- a. The use of protein shakes has become a trend in Australia as more people are becoming vegetarians and the use of these shakes to be used as a nutrient replacement source is increasing, this has put additional pressure on meat farmers as the amount of meat eaten is being reduced.
- b. As the focus on being fit and active increases the market for junk food will decrease and the market for healthy alternatives will increase. This has been seen in the adaption of fast food outlets now offering healthy choices as well as supermarkets increasing space for healthy food options.
- c. Buying Australian and supporting Australian businesses has become a huge winner for Australian producers who can now compete in the market by stating the fact they are Australian, as we are all becoming more aware of the sustainability of businesses and the earth in general buying local has become a popular trend.
- d. More and more shoppers are shopping on line, which has meant the development of websites that are easily usable and accessible to the large market, the stores need to have all there produce available for time poor consumers who still expect the best.

7.

- a. Locally produced foods are at the forefront of the sustainable food movement, however there is an number of other factors that need to be taken into consideration, these include- chemical usage, food miles, packaging, sustainable farming methods with the way the land and livestock are treated. Consumers are considering their options more closely, manufacturers need to make business decision based on consumer directions, retail is using the positives of sustainable food to generate sales.
- b. The slow food movement in Australia focuses on indigenous foods however it is a worldwide organisation. It strives to promote the use of indigenous seeds; plants and livestock that were