

# What is 'Eating Healthy'?

## Why Have The Current Health Guidelines Failed?

A Google query of '*eating healthy*' returns 554,000,000 results. Despite the huge number, most if not essentially all of the recommendations based in science, share a commonality. These approaches to health via diet do not work because they *only* view food in terms of their botanical origin or animal species and according to nutrients they contain. Due to this, foods that have very different effects on health and disease are often grouped together. As an example, a hand-crafted, grass-finished bison burger is a world away from a drive-thru processed patty; but both are lumped together as '*red meat*'. Whole grains are tossed together with sugary '*breakfast cereals*' and cookies as '*cereals and cereal grains*'. This antiquated perception of food processing has serious consequences.

As noted in many recent research studies, "Evidence on the relationship between food processing and health outcomes has been increasing steadily." Reports issued by UN agencies and other authoritative organizations list some processed foods and drinks as "certainly or probably" implicated in obesity and chronic diseases, including certain types of cancers. The foods included in the warnings are the foods so typical of the Standard American Diet (SAD). These are "energy-dense food products, fast foods, soft drinks, sugary drinks, refined starchy foods, processed meat and salt-preserved foods."

Both the US 2010 and the 2015–2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* reports advise less consumption of common ingredients of processed foods such as sodium, added sugars, trans-fats, refined grains, and processed meats. However,

these reports do **not** examine processing as such, and the term 'processing' is not even included in their glossaries of terms. Concern about food additives, which research continues to reveal is linked to increased inflammation and risk of T2DM and obesity, is usually limited and confined to issues of contamination. Virtually no consideration is afforded to the use of cosmetic food additives that are used in the manufacture of cheap processed oils and refined carbohydrates. These same additives are associated with abnormalities of the gut microbiome and the development of systemic, continuous, chronic low level inflammation.

To understand the relationship between the food we eat and our health, to eat healthfully, we must examine **where** our food comes from, **how** it is raised, and **what** is done to it after harvesting.