

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). Your use of this material constitutes acceptance of that license and the conditions of use of materials on this site.



Copyright 2007, The Johns Hopkins University and Sid Mintz. All rights reserved. Use of these materials permitted only in accordance with license rights granted. Materials provided "AS IS"; no representations or warranties provided. User assumes all responsibility for use, and all liability related thereto, and must independently review all materials for accuracy and efficacy. May contain materials owned by others. User is responsible for obtaining permissions for use from third parties as needed.



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG
SCHOOL *of* PUBLIC HEALTH

Section B

Food Trends and Meat Consumption

New, Emerging Foods

- Sweeteners
 - Cane sugar
 - High-fructose corn syrup
- Animal fat
- Accompanying decline in legume and complex carbohydrates

Is Meat Consumption Instinctive?

<u>Kg/person/year</u>	<u>1964/66</u>	<u>1974/76</u>	<u>1984/86</u>	<u>1997/99</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2030</u>
Developing countries	10	11	16	26	32	37
Transition countries	43	60	66	46	54	61
Industrialized countries	62	74	81	88	96	100
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	10	10	9	11	13
Near East/North Africa	12	14	20	21	29	35
Latin America and Caribbean	32	36	40	54	65	77
South Asia	4	4	4	5	8	12
East Asia	9	10	17	38	50	59

Source: World Agriculture Toward 2015 (FAO, 2003).

http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/DOCREP/005/Y4252E/Y4252E00.HTM.

Why Do We Prefer Different Foods?

- What WE eat is better than what others eat
- Inherent superiority
- Transcends time and place by virtue of its intrinsic deliciousness



Steak by [thomasstache](#). [Some rights reserved](#).



Fried grasshoppers by [add.me](#). [Some rights reserved](#).

- “Nutritionists know that the palate is trained, that taste and smell are subject to cultural control. Yet for lack of other hypotheses, the notion persists that what makes an item of food acceptable is some quality inherent in the thing itself. Present research into palatability tends to concentrate on individual reactions to individual items. It seeks to screen out cultural effects as so much interference. Whereas...the cultural controls on perception are precisely what needs to be analyzed.”
 - Anthropologist Mary Douglas, 1978

- What transcends time and place is human capacity to perceive a particular food in a particular way at a particular time and to associate from it



Escargot by [ulteriorepicture](#). [Some rights reserved](#).



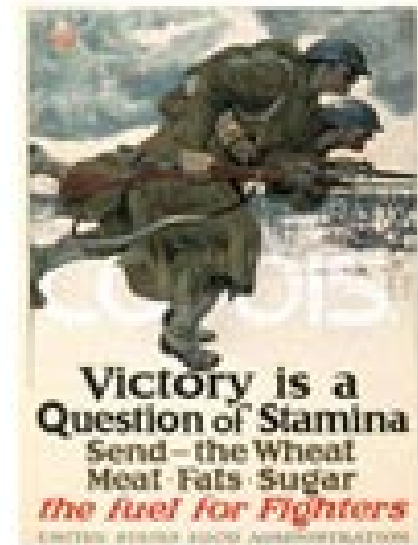
Gusanos de Maguey (Cactus Worms) by [Refracted Moments](#). [Some rights reserved](#).

“Beef—It’s What’s For Dinner”

- Ads Sponsored by the Beef Check-Off Program

Meat in the American Diet

- Soldiers were given meat 21 times per week during WWII



Beef Consumption in the U.S. (Animal Heads)

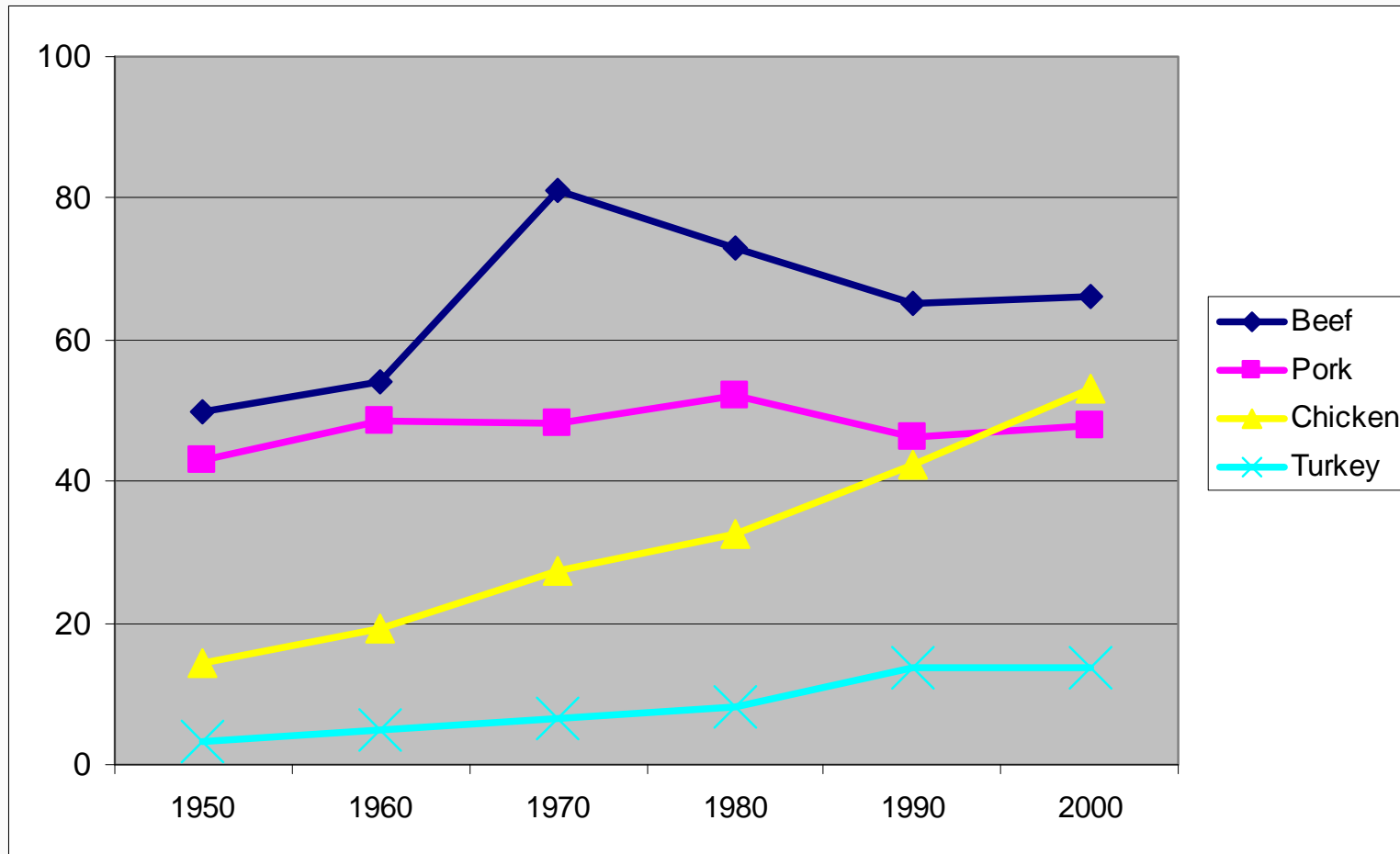
- 1930
 - 48.9 pounds per capita per year
- 1931–1941
 - Averaged less than 55 pounds
- 1941–1951
 - Stayed greater than 60 pounds
- 1964
 - Reached more than 100 pounds
- 1976
 - 127.2 pounds
- 2001
 - 94.3 pounds

Why Did Meat Consumption Increase So Much?

- Food expectations of returning soldiers
- Deprivation of civilians

Trends in per Capita U.S. Meat Consumption

■ Retail, boneless weight



Rise in Popularity of Beef

- Pork more efficient and less costly to produce in the 19th century
- After civil war, pastures used for cattle
- Refrigeration allowed preservation
- Beef could be prepared and cooked more easily than pork
- Culture of fast food and automobiles
- Cradle-to-grave marketing

Sexual Code of Food?

- Americans believe in “a sexual code of food which must go back to the Indo-European identification of cattle or increasable wealth with virility”

Beef vs. Carbohydrate Calories

- 8 million calories from sugar cane
 - 1 acre of good land
- 8 million calories from beef
 - 135 acres of good land
- 284 million pounds of beef imported from Central America in 1972

Why Do We Want Beef?

- We tout beef as energy food
- Eating fast is compulsory and laudable
- Beliefs about proper nutrition for soldiers
- Associations with masculinity
- We want beef because we are programmed to want beef!

Summary: Main Points

1. How culture—rather than nature—provides the human background for food choice
2. What is meant when we speak of “natural food”?
3. What does “natural human food” really mean?
4. Whether a basic human cuisine has evolved in broad outline in human history
5. Where protein fits into the overall picture of human food choice