

Food choice

- Current healthy eating advice, dietary needs, socio-economic factors, preferences, occasion and cost need to be considered when planning to cook.



Planning what to cook

Deciding on what to cook or eat, whether for yourself or someone else, requires making a number of decisions:

- beliefs and values;
- consumer information;
- food preferences;
- food provenance;
- health and wellbeing;
- social and economic considerations;
- who, what, when and where.



Consumer information

Information can help consumers make informed choices, including

- advertising and marketing;
- media;
- online blogs/forums;
- packaging, nutrition and health claims;
- point of purchase information;
- product placement;
- recipe ideas.

Who, what, when and where

The time of day, location and who is eating can impact food choice:

- eating alone, with family or friends;
- celebration;
- day of the week,
- location, e.g. at home, school or work, at a restaurant, on the go;
- meal or snack;
- occasion and time of day.

Personal preferences

A number of factors can influence personal preferences, including:

- colour, size and shape of crockery and cutlery used;
- portion size;
- serving style;
- taste, aroma, texture, appearance, shape and colour of food.

Social and economic considerations

The cost of food, money available and social aspects will influence people's food choices:

- cost of food;
- greater food availability;
- income;
- labour saving equipment;
- lack of cooking skills;
- long hours at work;
- wider range of convenience foods.

Allergy and intolerance

There are 14 ingredients (allergens) that are the main reasons for adverse reactions to food. People who are allergic, or intolerant, to these ingredients should take care to avoid eating them. The 14 allergens are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Celery (and celeriac) | Milk |
| Cereals containing gluten | Molluscs |
| Crustaceans | Mustard |
| Eggs | Nuts |
| Fish | Peanuts |
| Lupin | Sesame |
| | Soybeans |
| | Sulphur dioxide |

Food provenance

Food provenance is about where food is grown, caught or reared, and how it was produced. Food certification and assurance schemes guarantee defined standards of food safety or animal welfare. There are many in the UK, including:



Red Tractor



British Lion



RSPCA Assured



Marine Stewardship Council

Health and wellbeing

People may choose their food based on their own or their family's health and wellbeing:

- age and gender;
- allergy and intolerance;
- body image;
- health status;
- mental health;
- physical activity.

Beliefs and values

Personal beliefs and values include:

- culture, tradition and heritage;
- food ethics, e.g. environment, fair trading, organic, free-range, local and seasonal food;
- lifestyle choices, e.g. vegetarian, vegan;
- religion.

Religion	Pork	Beef	Lamb	Chicken	Fish
Islam	x	Halal only	Halal only	Halal only	✓
Hinduism	x	x	✓	✓	✓
Judaism	x	Kosher only	Kosher only	Kosher only	✓
Sikhism	x	x	✓	✓	✓
Buddhism (strict)	x	x	x	x	x
Seventh-day Adventist Church	x	x	x	✓	✓
Rastafari movement	x	x	x	x	x

Eating the seasons

Most foods are grown in a particular season of the year, e.g. strawberries are harvested in summer in the UK. These are called 'seasonal foods'. Buying foods when they are in season will often mean that the price is lower. Technology and the importation of food has allowed food to be available all year round. Frozen foods, such as vegetables, are a great alternative to fresh, if they are unavailable.

Key words

Advertising: Advertising is a form of communication for marketing and used to encourage, persuade, or manipulate an audience to continue or take some new action.

Allergens: Substances that can cause an adverse reaction to food.

Ethical: Relating to personal beliefs about what is morally right and wrong.

Food certification and assurance schemes: Defined standards of food safety, quality or animal welfare.

Food provenance: Where food is grown, caught or reared, and how it was produced.

Marketing: Promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising.

Religion: A particular system of faith and worship.

Seasonal food: Food grown at a particular time of year.

Seasonality: The times of year when a given type of food is at its peak, either in terms of harvest or its flavour.

Task

Research one consideration when planning what to cook. Prepare a PPT presentation to share with the class next lesson.

To find out more, go to: <https://bit.ly/3dNUMBf>