



By Dr. Carol Ann Fischer, D.C., N.D.

According to many experts, the way we eat has changed more in the past 50 years than it has in the last 10,000 years. The main problem is that we do not know where our food comes from. If we did, we would not eat it. By educating ourselves, we can learn where food comes from, how much of our food is made from genetically engineered seed, and why organic is best for a nutritionally sound diet.

Our industrialized food supply started with McDonald's and other fast food chains that introduced the assembly-line system to drive-in restaurants in order to simplify and cut costs. Using this method, McDonald's was able to create uniformity, conformity and cheapness on a large scale, selling inexpensive food that tasted good.

Fifty years later, we now know more about the impact that fast food has on our health and on the economy. According to Eric Schlosser, author of "Fast Food Nation," corn makes up 30 percent of all US commercial agriculture. With the current emphasis on mass production of our food supply, corn has become the staple crop. Food is now engineered from corn so that it does not become rancid or go stale. In fact,

says Schlosser, almost 90 percent of all manufactured food contains corn and/or soy in clever rearrangement. Additionally, he says, more than 90 percent of all soybeans and most of the corn used in the food supply are genetically modified.

Genetically modified seed was created in 1996 to withstand Monsanto's pesticide, Roundup®. The company was successful in getting FDA approval to use GMO seed, and to prevent GMO food labeling. Today, more than 70 percent of all supermarket food sold is made from genetically modified seed.

The 2009 movie "Food, Inc." produced by Robert Kenner, reveals the current industrialization of the world's food supply. The film lists all the sweeteners that are created from corn. These include high fructose corn syrup, sorbitol, xylitol, fructose, Sweet & Low, sucrose, maltodextrin, poly dextrose, inositol, and saccharin. Instead of using these man-made corn sweeteners, Americans would be better to trust real, unprocessed sweeteners like raw honey, maple syrup, stevia or raw organic sugar cane.

Other common products that contain corn in the form of high fructose corn syrup might be

surprising. These include Motrin, white vinegar, imitation vanilla extract, Velveeta cheese, paper diapers, Kingsford charcoal, Tropicana orange juice, Kool-Aid, Coke, margarine and many others. Corn is also used to make synthetic vitamins and minerals like ascorbic acid (commonly known as vitamin C), calcium stearate, and alpha tocopherol (commonly known as vitamin E).

The American food supply is now controlled by a handful of multinational corporations.

Today the top food four companies – Cargill, Tyson, Swift and National Beef – control more than 80 percent of the commercial food market. Following McDonald's successful idea, these corporations have created large-scale food production farms, a mechanized system where most food is produced in a very small space.

For example, on many farms, chickens are raised in cramped quarters in the dark, while cattle are warehoused in over-crowded feed lots. Cows are no longer allowed to eat grass, according to author Michael Pollan, who wrote "Omnivore's Dilemma". Instead, he says, they are fed GMO corn because it is cheap

and it fattens them quickly. Hogs, chicken and farm raised tilapia and salmon are also fed GMO corn for fattening purposes and to keep the prices low. All factory raised animals and poultry are given antibiotics to keep bacterial infections under control. Today the average American eats 200 pounds of GMO corn fed, antibiotic riddled meat every year.

The power to change the current food supply is in our hands, however. Every food item purchased is a vote for that type of food. If the food is not organic or locally grown, then it is commercially produced and modified. Each organic purchase is a vote against the industrialized food conglomerates. Support organic farms and local farmers by shopping at farmer's markets and purchasing organic food.

For better health, purchase organic free-range beef, pork and poultry. Free range ensures that the animals and poultry are allowed to roam free to eat their natural diet, and are not given any antibiotics, hormones or drugs. Eat wild caught fish instead of farm-raised fish to avoid consuming additional antibiotics and genetically modified corn. Eat organically grown fruits and vegetables to decrease exposure to GMO seed and pesticides, and increase nutritional intake. A study published in the Journal of Applied Nutrition showed that organically grown fruits and vegetables contained about twice the amount of beneficial minerals as those grown by conventional methods.

Spring is when the farmer's markets open, and when the body naturally starts to detoxify. All native cultures around the world have spring rituals involving body cleansing to eliminate stored winter toxins. Organic beets, onions, garlic, asparagus, radishes, and organic broccoli provide the nutrients and fiber to aid in detoxification and rid the body of the effects of genetically modified foods.

To locate farmer's markets visit Farmers-MarketOnline.com or Local-Farmers-Markets.com. Healthy Traditions Network is the local chapter of the Weston Price Foundation. The website posts a list of Michigan farmers who raise organic free range beef. Visit HTNetwork.org and WestonAPrice.org.

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