

# 18 cultural rules for ecological public health eating\*

[Tim Lang, Feb 6 2007]

- Eat less but better; go for quality
- Choose food not just for what it is but for how it was grown, reared, delivered and processed
- Eat simply as a norm and eat feasts as celebrations, i.e. exceptionally
- Eat no more than you expend in energy; build exercise into your daily life
- Eat equitably: don't take food out of another's mouth
- Eat a plant-based diet with flesh more sparingly, if at all;
- If you do eat flesh (fish or meat), chose that which has run/swum as wild /free-range as possible; the nutrients are different
- Celebrate variety, the goal being to get biodiversity into the field and thence to your plate; for instance, try aiming to eat 20-30 plant species per week
- Think fossil fuels; embedded energy in food is 'oil'
- Eat seasonally, where possible
- Eat according to the proximity principle, as locally as you can; support local suppliers
- Learn to cook quickly producing simple meals; leave fancy food for really special occasions
- Be prepared to pay the full (sometimes hidden) costs of producing and transporting the food; if you do not, others will
- Drink water not soft drinks
- If you drink alcohol, use it moderately
- Be aware of hidden ingredients in food; look at the label to locate the unnecessary salt and sugars; if they are there, don't buy
- Educate yourself without becoming neurotic
- Enjoy food in the short-term but think about its impact long-term

**\* expanded & altered from an idea in: Tim Lang & Michael Heasman (2004), *Food Wars: the global battle for mouths, minds and markets*, London: Earthscan**