

## UnFed: Creating Equality in our Food Systems



Locally grown food for everyone

### Preparing Healthy Food

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V\\_VPF2E3j8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V_VPF2E3j8)

**Inflammation and Chronic Disease:** With nearly 50% of Americans suffering from *at least* one chronic disease (heart disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer) it's important to view how what you put in your body affects your health. The American standard diet of processed foods includes by-products of corn, wheat and soy because it is cheap for the manufacturers, not healthy for the body. Preparing healthy food at home puts you in the driver's seat as to what your body makes new cells out of. Think of "*Healthy Food*" as a single ingredient, no chemicals, no preservatives, and from the earth not from boxes.

**Good and Bad Oils:** It is important for our health to cook with oils that don't break down under heat and create inflammation-inducing free radicals. Certain oils are not strong enough chemically to stay bonded at high heat. They contain linoleic acid and when oxidized (heated) release polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs). Oxidation leads to free radicals which leads to inflammation in the body leaving it susceptible to disease. PUFAs have been linked to heart disease, obesity and other chronic illnesses. The omega 6 oils to steer clear of or cut down on are: sunflower, safflower, vegetable, soybean, corn, grapeseed, and canola. Choose more omega-3 healthy oils which are: *olive, avocado, coconut, ghee or grass-fed butter*.

**It's A Skill to be Developed:** Viewing food planning and preparation as a developing skill allows us to see a future where we not only can cook delicious meals but, can do it quickly and on a budget. Not to mention the health benefits! This is the key to taking ownership of your health and with time and practice you will improve. Open your mind to eating whole-foods at every meal.

Develop a formula for meal structure that works for you and your eating style whether you are paleo, vegan, vegetarian.... Choose your healthy *fat* – fish, beef, olive oil, nut and/or seeds, then your clean, healthy *protein* – eggs, fish and nuts (some foods fit both categories). *Fruit and veggies* at every meal and *whole grains*, if that feels good for you. When you are making your choices try to also avoid ultra-refined sugars, flours, and chemicals.

Being prepared will be your best friend when it comes to making healthy food, and that doesn't just apply to fresh ingredients in your fridge. Get creative with shelf-stable options and fill the pantry with dry staples like quinoa, lentils, and beans that you can always have on hand for quick meal options when you're running low. There are also protein and veggie pastas, which taste great and provide more fiber and

protein compared to traditional pasta. Packages of salmon or tuna can supply a quick and convenient omega-3 packed protein source that can be added to various dishes.

Embrace and enjoy the process of food preparation. Have fun with it, play some good music and get chopping. You may find it rhythmic and calming! Utilize time on the weekends after shopping to chop vegetables, wash lettuces and herbs, or pre-portion proteins to save yourself time during the week. As you are taking your time with meal prep, cook on low or medium heat unless high heat is called for. Mix it up and rotate between *Sauteing, Searing, Grilling, Roasting, Baking, Steaming, and Raw*. Roasting vegetables is a game changer and requires minimal effort. It makes a vegetable crispy and crunchy while maintaining the deliciousness of the vegetable itself.

Develop "go-to" meals that you enjoy making each week. Cook enough to have leftovers for another one or two meals. Leftovers are great for breakfast or lunch! Stock up on frozen veggies and fruit that are easy to thaw or cook in microwave. Cut up cucumbers, peppers and apples for a side dish for dinner. Rather than using store-bought dressings and sauces, which are usually filled with refined oils and sugar, make your own or try using simple ingredients in your kitchen to pack extra flavor into your meals. To dress a fresh green salad, squeeze a lemon over it for kick of citrus and extra boost of Vitamin C to support immunity, or mash an avocado to add a creamy element of healthy fat, seasoning it with pink Himalayan sea salt. Keep your healthy take-out options on hand and quick/snack dinners ideas like hummus and veggies for when you just don't feel like cooking.

**The Next Generation:** By cooking at home and having whole foods in your house you are setting yourself up to make healthy choices without having to think about it in the moment. Additionally, it gives you the opportunity to try new things and experiment with making your favorite dishes healthier. We want the next generation of kids to grow up as little chefs who understand the techniques of cooking and preparing delicious food. It's important not to lose the flavor and soul that goes with home cooking for family and friends! Shop and cook often, local and fresh!

### **Documentaries**

Chefs Table – Netflix series

Salt Fat Acid Heat – Netflix series

### **Resource for Recipe Blogs (choose your style- paleo, vegan...)**

[Top Blogs for Healthy Recipes](#)