

The Future of Food

It's possible that in the future people may be able to get all the nutrients they need by simply taking one pill a day, or drinking a vitamin shake. In that scenario, food would be basically useless. But that would only work if people enjoyed taking pills or drinking vitamin shakes. The bottom line is that people like food. Granted, it is essential for survival, but that's just one of many reasons why people eat (*they also eat for enjoyment, social interaction, to get a quick fix for depression, to pass the time, and so on and so on*).



The future will probably not focus so much on replacing the need for food, but will instead aim at improving food. As always, the first concern is convenience. The past decades have seen an explosion in fast food, a rise in the popularity of the frozen dinners, and a growing dependence on the microwave. All of this points to a continuing development in our culture—people want to have good meals quickly. The coming decades will most likely introduce faster ways to prepare food. Perhaps the microwave will be replaced by the “Rehydrator Machine,” and frozen dinners will be replaced by “Dehydrated Meals.” The Rehydrator Machine will put the water back into the Dehydrated Meals and make them ready to eat in a matter of seconds.

Besides wanting fast meals, people are growing more concerned about health. Already, many previously unhealthy products have healthy substitutes. There is low fat ice-cream, diet soda, and meat substitutes. In the coming years, the selection will continue to grow. Wouldn't it be nice to have a sirloin steak without any fat, or fried chicken without the grease?

Another growing concern relates to economics. While canned or frozen foods last for a long time, many people still prefer fresh foods. The problem is that fresh foods spoil, and they are often tarnished even when first purchased. Scientists are experimenting with genetically improved crops, as well as effective fertilizers, that will increase the length and quality of fresh foods. In the meantime, different preservatives are being developed to keep foods fresh for a long time in a more natural state.