

THE FOOD STORY

You can usually tell where a person is from by just looking at her plate. Food ties us to the geography we originate from. That's why you have Indian engineers working in technology companies in far-away United States demanding (and getting!) rice, *idlis* and *sambar* in their office canteen. It's also why you will see Indian and Chinese restaurants in unexpected parts of the world where you least expect to find them. Indeed, food follows people!



The staple is the centre

Meals are constructed around staples. A staple is a food that is frequently eaten by people in an area, sometimes at every meal. The staple is the main source of food and nutrition for people.

The most popular staples

- Grains like rice, wheat or maize
- Root vegetables and tubers like potato, yam and cassava
- Animal products like meat, milk, eggs and fish

The habitat and food

The habitat of an area – both the kind of soil found in a place and the weather – help decide the staple of an area. For instance, in India, in the colder north, wheat is the staple, while in the south, rice is more important.

Did you know?

- Just 15 plants are the main source of energy for more than 75% of the world's people, and just three grains – rice, wheat and maize – are the staples for over 4 billion people.
- White, wriggly, larvae (young grubs) of moths were an important source of food and once a staple in the diets of some Aborigines. The Aborigines are the native people of Australia.
- It was in India that rice was first grown as a domestic crop thousands of years ago.

Food travels

During the age of exploration (several hundred years ago) as explorers began visiting different parts of the world, food began to travel as well. European explorers introduced potatoes and cocoa beans from South America to the rest of the world. Potatoes were, in fact, the staple of the Incas of South America. Today, potatoes and chocolate (the main product of the cocoa beans) are found all over the world.



Food on a grand scale

Food continues to travel and is an important item of trade between countries. As a result, farmers grow food especially for export (sale to another area/country) over and above what people in their areas eat. With huge container ships and fast aircraft, it is now cheaper than ever to transport food across the world.

Open your refrigerator and, chances are, you will find at least a few things that came from countries far, far away – exotic cheeses and meats like ham from Europe, pasta sauces from Italy and fruits from all over the world.

Is this good?

Like anything that travels, transporting food consumes a huge amount of energy. The shiny red apple that comes from the United States has travelled in planes for thousands of miles before making its way by truck to your supermarket. As we all well know, such travel requires the use of many litres of petrol and diesel. Not only are these natural resources in short supply, but their use also causes a lot of pollution. By simply picking an apple from Himachal Pradesh over an imported apple, you can help prevent such waste and pollution.

Also, to prepare food for long distance travel, it needs to be processed, which

usually involves the addition of chemicals to keep food fresh. Such food also needs extra packaging. While processed food has less nutrition (good things in food), packaging requires the use of more natural resources like paper, which is not good for the environment.

Be a 'locavore'

"Locavores" are people who are conscious of such waste and are careful about buying things that are produced locally, or at least within their own country. There is nothing wrong really with wanting that bar of Swiss chocolate once in a while, but by mostly choosing to buy things locally grown/made in our country, you can make a difference. Plus, local food is not just better for the environment, it is also cheaper!

Can one person make a difference?

If everyone stops buying imported food, demand for such food will drop and companies will stop importing them in large quantities. This will make a difference.

Will the Earth run out of food?

For people like us who have food on demand at home and outside, this seems like a strange question. But millions of people in African countries are already asking this question. Many of them depend on special food agencies for their daily food.

With much of the earth's usable land already being used for growing crops, there aren't too many ways to produce more food. On the other hand, the population (the number of people in the world) is increasing. With more demand, and less supply, people are beginning to go hungry. And the first people to do so are the poorest who cannot pay for more food. We have to be careful not to waste, as well as ensure that everyone has enough to eat. After all, there is only giant field – our planet – we can grow things on!



Roots Academy, a start-up Primary School, will cater to the educational needs of children in the age groups of 6 to 10 years, i.e. Class 1 to Class 5 in the first year of operation, and continue ahead.

A blend of Montessori learning method and classroom techniques, a non-competitive, activity-based conducive environment for the child to work and learn with confidence using his potential and basic skills. The hands-on learning experiences will stimulate concept learning as opposed to rote learning.

Music, Art forms, Theatre, Sports and skill-based learning as part of the curriculum.

Credentials:

- 8 Branches of ROOTS MONTESSORI and growing.
- More than 30 children move to 1st Std every year.
- Strong brand name of ROOTS MONTESSORI and Pruthvi Banwasi and Pranothi Banwasi as Educators.
- Support of 20 authentic Montessori schools in South Bangalore.
- Prof. Manohar Deshmukh ex-NCERT board member as Chairman.
- Mrs. Kokila Amarnath - with 35 years of experience with South Bangalore's reputed school has been on board as Principal Roots Academy from June 2012.
- More than 2500 ex-parents wishing ROOTS ACADEMY their support.



Roots
ACADEMY

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