

You are what you eat!

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Cultural Ecology is the study of the cultural aspects of human interaction with the environment.⁷

The purpose of understanding cultural ecology in the context of food is to relate and connect the four food subsistence strategies and find a commonality. Culture and environment shape humans as a species and food is the driving force of that change. The four subsistence strategies are a part of the human experience as well as cultural evolution. These strategies continue to be practiced in many parts of the globe. In our ever changing connected and globalized world many communities are experiencing the effects of globalization. Culture identity and knowledge loss along with a feeling of insignificance are the lasting impacts of the current global food system. The resistance in recent times comes from revitalization and re-localization movements centered around culture and community.



Human use of fire for cooking began about 500,000 years ago.⁵



Subsistence Strategies	Description
Hunter/Gatherer	Groups that make their primary living from the exploitation of wild foods. Hunting actively looking for, killing, butchering and consuming animals. Gathering-the collection of relatively small and non-mobile resources wild plants, small land fauna and shellfish. ⁷
Horticulture	Low intensity agriculture involving relatively small scale fields, plots, and gardens, food raised primarily for personal consumption rather than for trade or central authority. ⁷
Pastoralism	The herding, breeding, consumption, and use of managed or domesticated animals, to the general exclusion of plants. ⁷
Agriculture	The cultivation of soil for growing crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, and other products. ⁷

“Cooking the act with which culture begins.”⁵

“Food is central to our personal and cultural identities.”¹

Why food matters

- Food sustains human life.⁷
- Comes from our environment.⁷
- Shapes our culture.⁷
- Food is at the center of human migration, society, conflict, and evolution.⁴



Opportunities

- Relocalization and revitalization.³
- Farmer's Market and Food Co-ops.³
- Buy local and organic foods.³
- Support local eateries.³
- Find a niche-do your part.⁷
- Sustainable living.⁷



Challenges

- Global food system.³
- Cultural identity and knowledge loss.⁵
- No connection to the food you eat.⁵
- Mass production and consumption.²
- Deforestation and pollution.⁴
- Population growth.⁴
- Climate Change.⁷

