

Pre-1400s

Coprolites dating roughly from A.D. 400 to 1300 reveal a diet high in fiber and protein from diverse seasonal foraging—including insects, seafood, seeds, roots, leaves, and stems. Staples included rabbit, maize and beans.



1493

Christopher Columbus saw the Native people of the Americas and remarked at their beautiful, robust stature and health. He ate of the foods and described them with awe and pleasure.



1500–1600

Pemmican preserved meat. Locusts and other insects were eaten readily. They planted corn, beans and squash together in a symbiotic way.



1600–1700s

Rice became a staple of the American diet and a major cash crop.



1780s

The average American consumed about six pounds of sugar per year.



1869

Formula is first marketed in America as being superior to breast milk.



1876

Treaty with Hawaii: Sugar beet farms surge, and Americans continue to increase their consumption of sugar.



EatBeautiful.net American Food Timeline, from A.D. 400 to Present Day



1880–1910

One out of three people live on a farm and eat from that farm.



1830

Per capita, American consumption of sugar is 15 lbs., mostly molasses.



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1890s–1950

While many copied Queen Victoria's lavish spreads, a health-food expert created meat alternatives and corn flakes. Dr. Kellogg was soon rivaled by his former patient C.W. Post, who introduced Grape Nuts.



1899

Chemist David Wesson introduces high-heat processing of vegetable oils with cottonseed oil—beginning a century of misinformation, propaganda and America's switch from butter and lard.



1910

70% of Americans enjoy lard for cooking and baking. Butter consumption is still high; heart disease mortality is below 10%.



1920

During prohibition, Americans start drinking more soda—increasing their intake of sugar.



1911–1917

Crisco provides a recipe alternative for making cakes without butter and eggs during WWI.



1920–1950

Convenience foods soar in supply and demand: Velveeta, canned foods, Jell-O, Kool-Aid, margarine, non-dairy whipped cream, frozen foods. (Apparently spelling also went out the door at this time.) Several animal experiments establish the first vitamins, but later critics contend that some of the experiments were flawed.



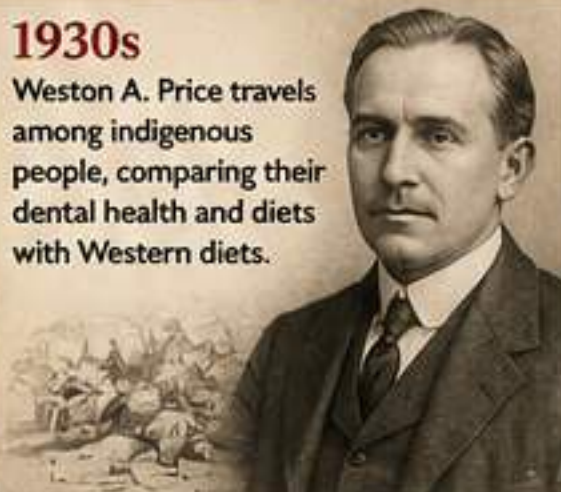
1929–1939

The Great Depression meant decreased nutrition to most families, less food, less meat and produce, because they were more expensive.



1930s

Weston A. Price travels among indigenous people, comparing their dental health and diets with Western diets.



1930

Margarine consumption exceeds butter consumption for the first time.



1937

Cottonseed oil consumption exceeds coconut oil for the first time.



1940s

Peanut butter is economical and popular for soldiers in WWII. Monosodium glutamate comes into use (borrowed from the Chinese, who developed it in 1908). Factory-made cheeses replace traditional cheese making; Americans now eat more processed cheese than real cheese.



1942

The war causes a brief sugar crash. Sugar is used for explosives, antiseptics, and access to cane fields in the Pacific is cut off or destroyed.



1943

The U.S. begins adding vitamins and minerals to bread and grain products to make up for nutritional deficiencies.



1948

Obesity and diabetes are on the rise as Americans eat less animal fat and increase their consumption of trans fats.



1950s

Reddi-wip and TV dinners become popular. Diet culture, low-fat, and calorie-counting begin to take hold.



★ FROM FORAGING TO PROCESSING—OUR FOOD STORY CONTINUES. ★

Let's return to wisdom: Eat simply. Focus on protein and seasonal foods. Avoid toxins and highly processed foods.