

SUSTENANCE IS FOOD

Besides water, without food our life ceases to be. That is a pretty simple, straight forward statement that anyone would say: “Yeah, well I know that! What else is new?” You would be correct in saying that is a very simplistic statement to make, but the subject of food is anything but simple. The part of the food subject most disconcerting is how little most of us understand about the food that we eat, where it comes from, and, most important, what affect it has on our bodies. I would say that the majority of us only ‘know’ food by what we think tastes good, what we were brought up on and served by our families and, worst of all, what we see and hear in advertisements. In my humble opinion, that just may leave some huge gaps in the knowledge we should possess so we can determine the food we need to be eating for good health, its’ contents and probably just how it should be grown so that it provides that nutrition.

Knowing all that there is to know about food would be an impossible task, unless you spent your whole life learning about it. For almost all of us, that is just not feasible or reasonable no matter how important the subject of food may be. Although I’ve gone through my life literally loving to eat, I really haven’t given food, or at least the make up of the food I was eating, much more thought than how it tasted. In retrospect I realize how fortunate I was to have had a Mother that insisted that we “eat our vegetables”, which she always served with our meals, and, a Father that backed her up. To this day, there is almost no vegetable that you could put in front of me at a meal that I wouldn’t eat. But simply eating vegetables is not the cure all-end all. If the vegetables are not grown properly in good soil and harvested and delivered in the proper ways, they can be nutritiously worthless. The same can be said about the grains, poultry and meat that may be in our diet. Much of the food we consume today is mass-produced and delivered to our local stores in a ‘just in time’ manner. This food is grown, harvested, manipulated and transported in such a way that leans toward the visual appearance and taste of the product rather than to it’s nutritional value.

This ‘just in time’, mass food delivery system not only compromises food quality, but also it is very energy intensive. If there is a breakdown in the system, the results could be quite unpleasant to say the least. In fact, this system leaves us in a very vulnerable position if we haven’t planned ahead and have a stock of food for that ‘just in case’ situation should it occur. This is one important area that a person/family that is trying to live a more sustainable, self-sufficient and self-reliant lifestyle will probably examine closely and attempt to make some serious changes in how they have been doing things, and, just what it is they’ve been eating. Check out some of the other viewpoints on this and the next few pages. I’m sure they will give you a better insight into the subject of food and vegetable gardening. This really is a critical subject that all of us need to have a decent understanding of, and hopefully, begin to promote and support local farmers and food sources if we are not growing our own.