To construct a picture of food consumption and the production criteria that lead to that end, we will illustrate how the language of economics differs from the language of nutrition, and that of social science. Economists have approached food largely through production, as it contributes to concepts such as wealth, capital, and labour. Nutritionists have added medical and chemical analyses to our understanding of food as more than a biological necessity. Social scientists approach food as it contributes to well-being through the principle of sharing at both the household and community levels, as well as across national boundaries. The stark gastronomic realities for communities considered 'food-poor' reveal a whole range of complex considerations.

All three approaches converge when we consider consumerism, marketing, and globalization and the neologism 'glocalization'. Cuisines, gastronomies, and food cultures all bridge the nature/nurture dichotomy. Anthropologists draw attention to foods/gastronomies as a means of communication shared across communities, whether in the form of mangoes or McDonalds, haggis or sushi, and whether in less-industrialized settings or within Britain, Europe, Asia, or America. The positives of 'good foods' are contrasted with taboos on particular foods, or items deemed unclean, and thus 'inedible' (e.g. Douglas 1982: ch. 4). The material aspects of food are embedded in social values and ideological concepts about well-being.

10.3 Food From an Economic Perspective

Early anthropologists included their discussions about food within chapters on economics, i.e. how resources regarded as food were produced and exchanged. Authors described how food crops were
p. 239 cultivated, including who was responsible ↳ for which tasks, such as planting, weeding, and harvesting, as well as the performance of rituals to increase fertility. Malinowski, an anthropologist teaching at the London School of Economics, devoted *Coral Gardens and their Magic* (1922) to describing how Trobriand people met their food needs through gardening as practised through appeals to the gods.

Political dimensions of food production have emerged strongly as concern mounts about the viability of food production in developing nations. The politics of hunger is based in assessments of food adequacy and food security. Trade imbalances that include a high proportion of food imports, particularly in Pacific societies, have been castigated as leading to a high level of dependence on aid from former colonial powers, i.e. industrialized nations. For those nations who have little to export—whether minerals, industrial manufactures, or cash crops—food imports are considered a drain on their economies. 'Import substitution' messages sought to encourage governments to find ways to increase self-sufficiency, i.e. the amount of foods grown locally. Ironically this reversed history, as many of these nations had been self-sufficient until colonial powers imposed the need to grow cash crops, such as sugar, or coconut for oil, on lands dedicated to subsistence foods. The costs of imported foods over local foods present households with dilemmas of choice. Access to cash presents difficulties in provisioning households.

A Marxist approach to food as it contributes to capital and wealth has helped to broaden anthropologists' views of humanitarian concerns behind trading foods. Labour inputs necessary to produce foods were documented as mainly men's work, whether hunting or growing field crops, with women's work being considered 'domestic' and thus not contributing to the economy. The male bias of 'Man the Hunter' (Lee and DeVore 1968) as distinguished from 'Woman the Gatherer' in early economic literature has since been radically re-evaluated. Such gendered language of labour was vehemently contested in the latter part of the twentieth century, with female anthropologists questioning the biases in the early literature. For example, Weiner's (1976) reevaluation of Malinowski's account fifty years earlier of Trobriand men gaining prestige by filling their yam houses revealed that women's work was equally prestigious. Trobriand women contributed bundles of banana leaves that were essential to kin relationships between those contributing yams. As 'women's work', the banana leaf bundles had been overlooked by Malinowski with his focus on