Welcome to Spotlight. I’m Dave Bast. And I’m Liz Waid. Spotlight uses a special English method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand, no matter where in the world they live. “Peter Menzel and I invited ourselves to dinner with 30 families in 24 countries. We wanted to explore people’s oldest social activity: eating.” These are the words of writer Faith D’Aluisio. Peter Menzel is her husband. He is also a photographer - he takes beautiful pictures. Together, they travel the world. Faith writes about the things and people they see. And Peter takes pictures. In the mid 1990s, Faith and Peter began to notice how people’s diets across the world were changing. They decided to write a book about their observations. Today’s Spotlight is on this book called Hungry Planet: What the World Eats. Food is a very important part of family life. It is part of everyone’s history and culture. Faith D’Aluisio and Peter Menzel wanted to show how diet affects health and culture. And they wanted to present this information in a beautiful way. In their book, Faith explains: “To learn more about how diets are changing, we watched normal families all over the world. We watched as they farmed, shopped at the market, cooked, and ate. At the end of each visit, we created a picture of the family. In the picture, the family is surrounded by all the food they normally eat in one week.” Each chapter in the book Hungry Planet: What the World Eats, starts with this large picture of a family. All the food they eat in a week is spread around them. Under the picture are the names of the family members. There are also the names of the city and country where they live. The information also includes how the family prepares their food. Some families use a stove or a small electric microwave to cook their food. Other families cook around a fire on the ground. The book also explains how each family keeps their food fresh. Many families use an electric refrigerator to keep food cold. But other families must eat everything they prepare immediately. They have no way to keep their food fresh. For each picture, D’Aluisio and Menzel organized the families’ weekly food into groups – like meat, fruits and vegetables, milk products, grains and bread, and drinks. They added up the money spent on each food group. Then they found the total amount of money each family spends on food in one week. Nick Page and Marina Santee share some examples from the book: The Madsen family lives in Cap Hope village in Greenland. Five people live in the home. They spend $277 each week on food. They also hunt animals to eat fresh meat. These are animals that live in ice cold water such as polar bears, walrus, and arctic geese. Many people in Greenland hunt these large animals for their meat. The Mendoza family live in Todos Santos Cuchumatan, Guatemala. Eight people live in the home. They spend $25 a week on food. The Mendoza family only eat meat less than once a week. They spend most of their money on fruits and vegetables like bananas, zapote, passion fruit, avocados, green beans, and red chili peppers. The Al Haggan family lives in Kuwait City, Kuwait. Eight people live in the Al Haggan home. They spend $221 on food each week. Much of the food they eat is imported from other countries. They buy it at a western style market. The Revis family live in North Carolina, in the United States. There are four people in the family. They spend $342 each week on food. They spend a lot of their money on fast food from eating places like McDonalds, Taco Bell and pizza places. The Aboubakar family is from Darfur, Sudan. But they live as refugees in the country of Chad. D’jimia is a single mother. She has five children. The family spends a little over one dollar on food each week. Food does not cost as much here as in some other places. In other countries, where food costs more, this amount would be equal to about $24. Most of their meals are a thick liquid porridge made from the grain sorghum. D’jimia also receives food aid in her refugee camp. Some days the family lacks food. They must make difficult decisions. They must decide who gets more food, and who gets less. These are just a few of the examples of the families in the book Hungry Planet: What the World Eats. All of the pictures in the book show the different food cultures of people around the world. Some people grow most of their food on their own land. Other people buy almost everything at a market. Others do not even cook much of their food. They buy food that is already prepared. People reading the book can also see how money influences food. Some families have enough money to eat any kind of food they want. They can buy food imported from other countries at the market. But many people must eat only what grows in their own area, depending on the season. Some families eat a large amount of food. And other families must divide a limited amount of food. The book Hungry Planet: What the World Eats is not about food politics. The book’s authors, D’Aluisio and Menzel, are not exploring why hunger exists in the world. They are only sharing what they experienced. The purpose of the book is to help people understand how other people live. The book also encourages people to look at their own family and how they eat. Remember the Revis family from the United States? After seeing their picture in the book, the Revis family felt shame about the food they were eating. Mrs. Revis told D’Aluisio and Menzel: “Everyone in our family felt very troubled by the large amount and kinds of food on the table for the picture. Before my son eats something now, he will say to me, ‘Mom, how healthy do you think this food is?’ That never happened before”. People have different customs but we share many similarities. D’Aluisio and Menzel found that around the world people love food. And people in every culture love to welcome new friends to eat with their family. What are the cultural food customs in your family? What foods are common in your culture? You can share your thoughts on the script page of this program on our website at www.radioenglish.net. The writer of this program was Rebekah Schipper. The producer was Liz Waid. The voices you heard were from the United States and the United Kingdom. All quotes were adapted for this program and voiced by Spotlight. You can listen to this program again, and read it, on the internet at www.radioenglish.net. This program is called, "What the World Eats". We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye