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6 charts that show how much more Americans eat than they used to

Skye Gould May 10, 2017, 12:40 PM



The average American consumes more than 3,600 calories daily – a 24% increase from 1961, when the average was just 2,880 calories.

Americans haven't increased their consumption of all food and drink evenly, however — our alcohol intake peaked in the 1980s, but our growing consumption of vegetable oils alone accounts for more than half of the calorie spike.

Using [data](#) from The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAOSTAT) — which tracks caloric intake through 2013 — we've analyzed the diet changes that might be contributing to the [obesity](#) problem in the United States. Here's the breakdown:

Americans are consuming far more calories each day than is recommended (daily intake should be around 2,000 calories for women and 2,500 for men).

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Daily meat intake has risen by almost 100 calories per day per person.

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Daily calories from sugar and artificial sweeteners has also risen by almost 100.

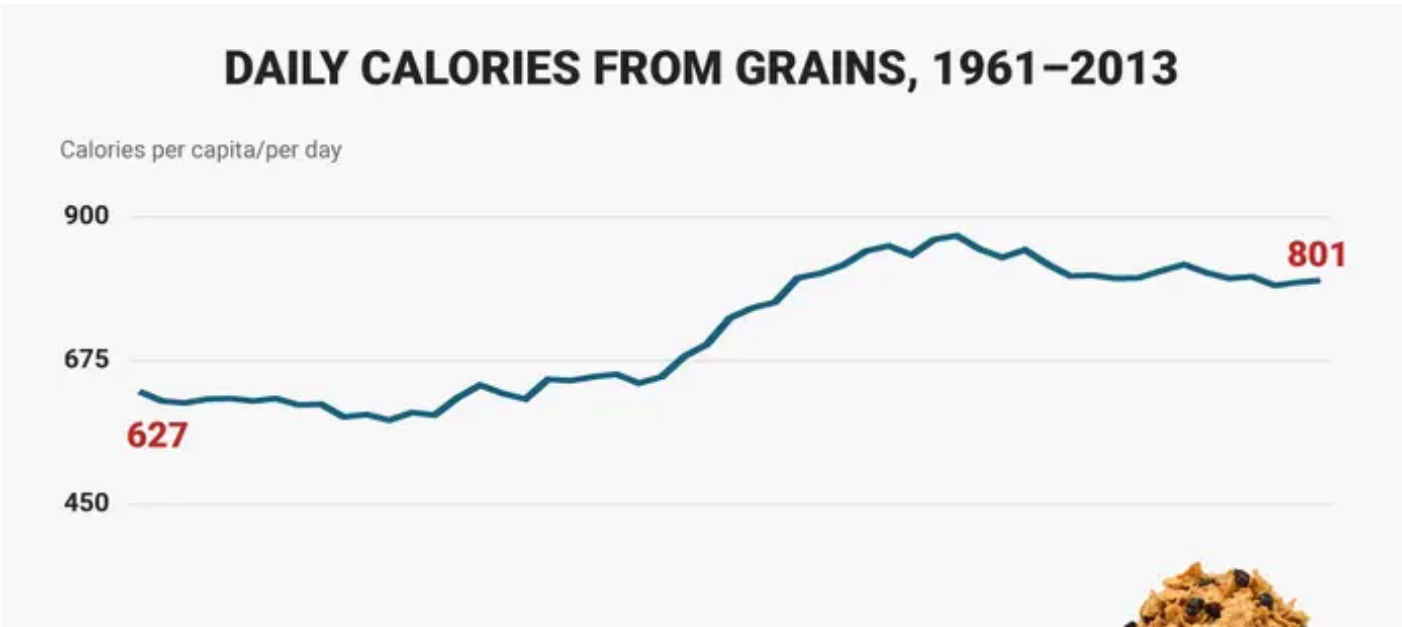
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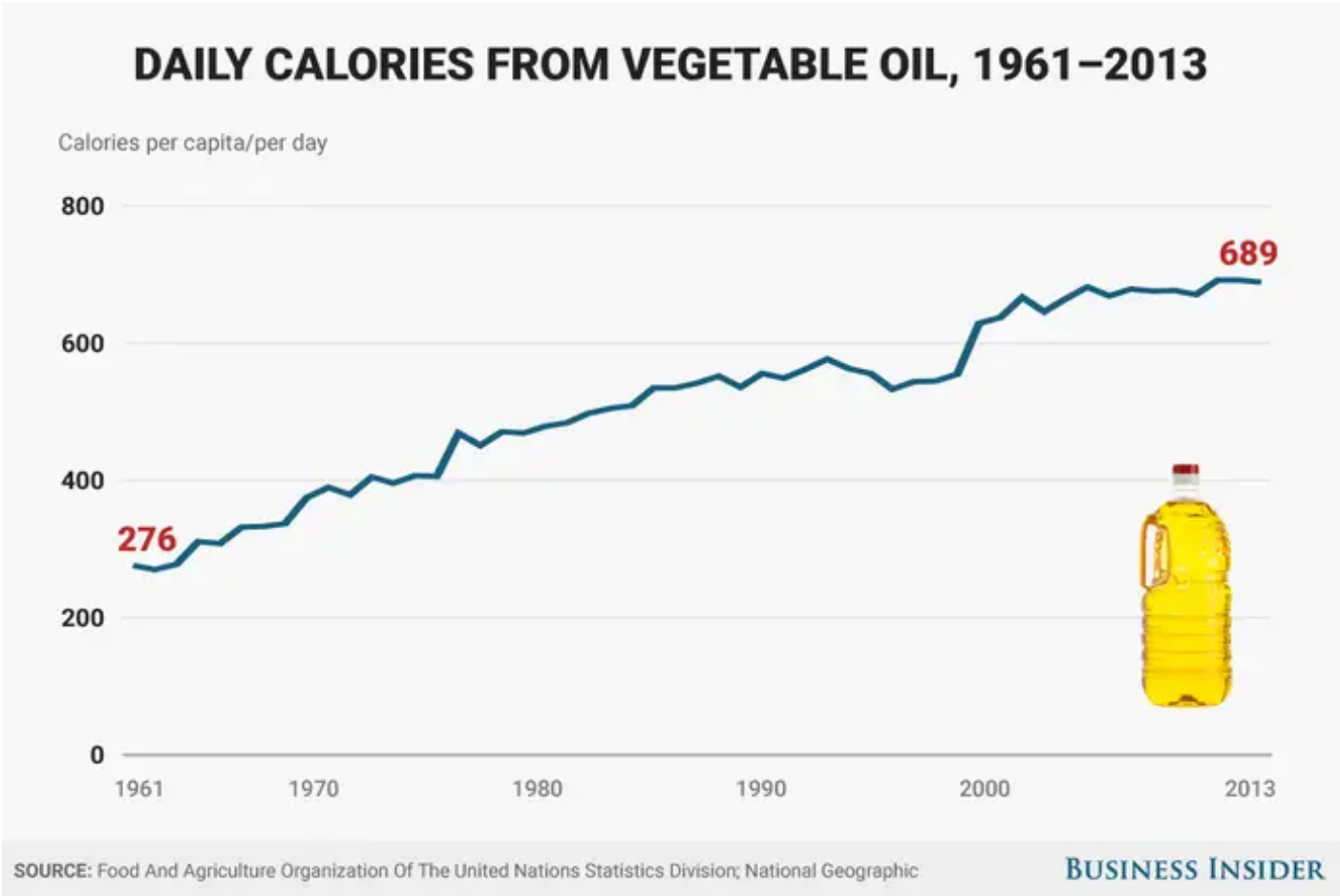
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Caloric intake from alcohol peaked in the 1980 at 185 calories per day, but still remains 50 calories higher now than it was in 1961.

Grains including barley, wheat, rice, rye, maize, and cereal account for more than 20% of daily caloric intake.



The most shocking increase, however, comes from vegetable oil – consumption skyrocketed from 276 daily calories in 1961 to 689 today.



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