

A Guide for Discussion and Use

Eating Alaska



A wry
journey
for the
“right thing”
to eat

A documentary film
by Ellen Frankenstein

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Contact Information

Please contact us for information about *Eating Alaska*.
 We welcome your questions, feedback, and responses to the film and the guide.
 You can also contact the filmmaker to attend a screening or talk with viewers via Skype.

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1. Getting Started

About the Guide

Eating is something we all have in common. Individuals of all ages, backgrounds and geographic locations can participate knowledgably in conversations about food, and can benefit from considering ways of producing, distributing and consuming foods that are healthy for our planet and ourselves.

This guide is intended to support screenings in a variety of settings. Feel free to use any and all pages necessary to tailor discussions to your purpose and audience.

Although the guide is organized into specific sections, each supports and complements the others.

About Eating Alaska

Eating Alaska portrays a serious yet humorous quest for the “right thing” to eat. It is about trying to break away from the industrial food system in a part of the world where the “right thing” means not only gardening and buying fresh seasonal food from local farmers, but also participating in a world of hunting and gathering. This is a journey into regional food traditions and our connection to the wilderness and what we put into our mouths through the eyes of a former vegetarian city dweller now living on an island in Alaska.

In *Eating Alaska*, viewers travel with the filmmaker as she searches for a meal that is healthy, sustainable and meaningful. Stops along the way include: visiting a home economics class in the Arctic and a vegan cooking class, fishing for wild salmon, learning to hunt, meeting locals dedicated to preventing the spread of toxic contaminants, and attending an Alaskan Native culture camp.

From the Filmmaker: Why We Made Eating Alaska



I wanted to make a film that would address the complexity of the choices surrounding what we eat. While *Eating Alaska* is set in a specific region, my hope was to create a film that would resonate with viewers both close to home as well as far beyond the communities and locations I featured.

Growing up in Upstate New York, I never imagined I would live in Alaska. The idea that I would one day wake up and see mountains, boat to a secret spot to collect wild beach asparagus, or get stranded by weather in a remote cove while hunting, was completely foreign to my suburban-bred mind.

The transition happened in steps. A collaborative film project called *A Matter of Respect* first brought me to an island community called Sitka. I traveled back and forth from California to work on this story of tradition, change and the challenges for Alaskan Natives balancing lives in two cultures. When the Los Angeles riots “interrupted” a project with kids in South Central Los Angeles, I accepted an invitation to return to work on a community media project in Sitka. Years have passed, and I am still here making films and working with kids and community members to help them tell their stories. I married Spencer, a fisher-hunter, and have since spent a lot of time gathering and putting up food, sharing meals with friends and attending events at the local Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall.

One day, I discovered that some women I knew were hunters. I was surprised and curious, and at the same time was reading more about the growing local foods movement, seeing books on sustainable eating hit the store shelves, and hearing more about climate change, peak oil (the idea that the world has a finite reserve of oil that is running out), and the impact our daily choices have on the environment.

I decided to make a film and started it by following a woman on a hunt. She wasn't content to let me stay behind the camera and wanted me to participate. I wondered, Could I pull the trigger? We thought this question would be an intriguing thread for the film, as I went on a journey from the temperate rainforests of Southeast Alaska to the tundra of the Arctic, searching for what makes sense to eat here. As I learned about the large amount of grocery store food we actually eat, I thought about the unparalleled abundance of the wilderness that provides the local foods I've gathered and shared, from herring eggs and seal oil to cloudberry and chanterelles. There is still so much I don't know about the flora and fauna around me, and this continues to change and challenge me.

About three years after we started filming, *Eating Alaska* was done. It has screened from Nome to New York City, initiating community events, panels and workshops. People relate to the film in many ways and have used it to bring attention to the greenhouses they want to build, highlight community efforts to reduce fossil fuel consumption, and share skills in composting, seaweed and mushroom harvesting.

Eating Alaska screening organizers have invited farmers, beekeepers, elders and other local experts to lead post-film discussions. They've created displays of relevant books and resources at public library screenings and held local art making workshops. We want audiences to laugh and contemplate. Screen the film with a local foods potluck, a sustainability fair, or a fundraiser for a community garden or food bank. It can be used to bring attention to a student effort to reduce the use of plastics on campus, or to improve school lunches.

Whether you live in Alaska or far from it, use this film to ask questions. What impact do your daily choices have? What else can you do to make your workplace, school, home or community more sustainable? What makes sense to eat where you live? How can we ensure that our future generations have access to healthy and safe foods and that our wild places—where we fish, hunt, gather and recreate—remain forever wild?

2. Organizing Your Screening

Ideas to Consider as You Plan a Screening

- ❖ **Screening Length.** *Eating Alaska* is nearly an hour long, so two and a half hours are recommended for viewing and discussing the film. If your screening will include additional activities before and/or after the film and discussion, you will need to add additional time as appropriate. In a school setting, you may have to watch the film over two or more class periods. For this reason, the guide includes suggestions on how to segment the film into meaningful sections.
- ❖ **Use the film broadly.** Although *Eating Alaska* spotlights particular communities, it raises issues that are applicable to all of us: health, nutrition, sustainability, ethics, urban vs. rural, local vs. global and the interconnectedness of human and natural systems (or interaction between people and the environment). Avoid taking a narrow approach in matching the film to your audience. Instead, design activities and discussions that offer a broad view and invite a deeper, more productive examination of the issues.
- ❖ **Design an active viewing experience.** A screening of *Eating Alaska* should not be a passive experience. Provide opportunities for viewers to be engaged through pre- and post-film activities and discussion. Good planning and facilitation will enable viewers to watch critically, reflect on preconceptions, and examine how the issues raised by the film relate to themselves and their community.

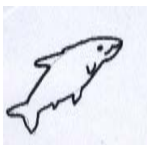
- ❖ **Create opportunities and allies.** Consider the larger educational, social, political and economic climate: what's happening in your community that can bolster your efforts to promote healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating? Where can you find partners to increase visibility and promote discussion around issues explored in the film? If your screening is a public event, bring in a broad range of co-sponsors. If you are an educator, invite unlikely colleagues such as PE, biology and home economics teachers, dieticians, food service personnel or school board members to join you.
- ❖ **Follow up.** Bringing people together is a first step; the real work often begins after the screening. How will you continue your commitment to responsible eating over the long term? Having a larger plan in place before your event will help you maintain momentum and action after the excitement generated by the film fades.

Pre- and Post-Film Activities

Potluck

Consider starting the event with a potluck. It might be a full meal, appetizer or dessert potluck. Use the potluck to promote the themes in *Eating Alaska*. Guiding principles used by past organizers include:

If not FROM YOUR BACKYARD, then locally produced.
If not LOCALLY PRODUCED, then Organic.
If not ORGANIC, then Family Farmed.
If not FAMILY FARMED, then from a Local Business.
If not from a LOCAL BUSINESS, then Fair Trade.



- **SOLE Food (Sustainable, Organic, Local, Ethical)**
- **Food with Personal Meaning (Cultural Heritage, Family Traditions)**

Bring something you...

**Grew,
Brew, or
Caught!**



Expert guests

Invite local farmers, master gardeners, researchers, chefs, elders, authors, cooperative extension agents, organizers of urban gardening and anti-hunger programs, or others who might contribute expertise and "food" for thought.

Interactive and information tables

Have partners and other organizations, agencies and individuals set up tables with membership and educational materials, demonstrations, hands-on activities and free samples. That might include tables hosted by the 4-H or cooperative extension, wellness programs, "green" church





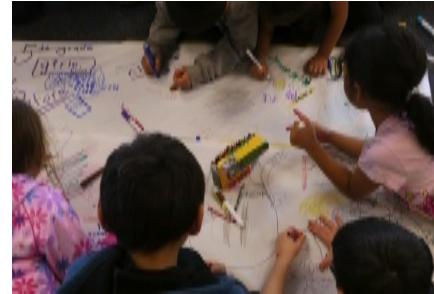
projects, programs promoting outdoor recreation and hunter safety, or local jam and tea makers. For screenings at public libraries, display books on food issues, gardening, hunting, harvesting, and living and building sustainably.

Workshops

Link the screening to a local workshop or event. Past screenings have included salmon smoking, seaweed harvesting, and bread kneading classes.

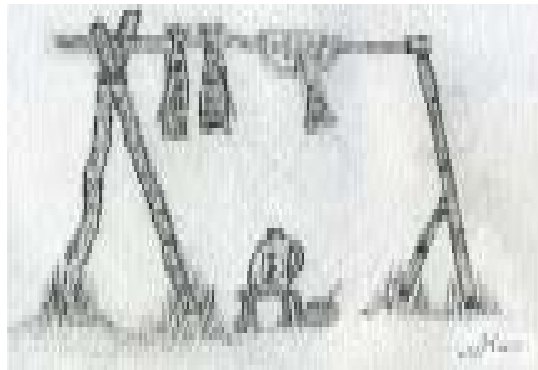
For Children

Consider offering children's activities such as decorating cloth napkins with fabric markers, making art with natural or recycled objects, drawing healthy meals on paper plates, or face painting featuring favorite fruits and vegetables. If your audience is likely to include young families, consider providing childcare options.



Planning Checklist

- Organize a planning committee; select a lead person from each sponsoring organization
- Find a facilitator(s)
- Set the event date, time and location
- Create your event agenda
- Invite organizations and individuals to host pre- and/or post-screening tables and activities
- Arrange for appropriate audio-visual equipment; remember, the sound system is as important as the video
- Make arrangements for hospitality, ushering, set-up and clean-up
- Print flyers and/or promotional materials, and publicize your event widely
- Thank your co-sponsors, facilitator and other key participants



3. For Facilitators

This section of the guide is designed to support planning and facilitating post-film discussions of *Eating Alaska*.

Preparing for Facilitation

- ❖ **Watch the film—even if you have seen it before.** Watch the film ahead of time so you're not processing your own reaction at the same time that you're trying to facilitate a discussion. New meanings will surface with each viewing, and the more familiar you are with the film and issues it raises, the better prepared you will be to understand and respond to others during the discussion.
- ❖ **Read background materials.** Think about your audience and what background information they might need to make sense of the film. For example, viewers outside Alaska may have questions about subsistence practices or Native cultures.
- ❖ **Prepare for "hot spots."** Identify parts of the film that will likely be challenging, controversial or provocative to your audience. Read the sections on "Hot Spots" (pp.9-14) so that you will be prepared to facilitate discussion around these issues if they arise.
- ❖ **Review facilitation notes.** Read and annotate these facilitation notes to highlight key points and facilitation strategies and to inject your personal style and strengths. If you are co-facilitating, you will also want to identify who is responsible for what during each activity.

Setting the Tone

Eating Alaska deals with sensitive and sometimes controversial topics. The facilitation strategies in this guide will help you create and maintain a respectful and supportive discussion. Consider your audience's knowledge, interests, age and vulnerabilities. Tailor your language and framing of the issues to their knowledge and experiences. Let your viewers' needs shape the discussion topics and style.

- ❖ **Establish group norms.** In order to learn from one another, people must feel that their experiences, thoughts, and feelings are valued—even when those ideas are unusual or unpopular. Begin the discussion by creating a group agreement so that everyone knows they will be heard and no one can dominate the discussion or silence others. Ask the group to explore ideas together, rather than debate positions. Remind everyone of the common goal—to discuss the film and the challenges, conundrums and ideas it raises about promoting healthy, meaningful and sustainable ways of eating.
- ❖ **Participation structures.** You may want to plan multiple structures for responding and participating—individual written reflections, pair-shares, small groups and whole group discussion—that accommodate different styles of engagement.

Facilitation Strategies

Establishing group norms helps create a supportive discourse environment; however, the most significant ally in achieving a worthwhile discussion is your ability to facilitate with sensitivity and respect for different experiences and points of view. The following are some suggestions for encouraging participation, deepening discussion, and handling rough spots that may arise during discussions. These strategies are designed to support both novice and experienced facilitators in using the film to the greatest advantage. If you are new to facilitation, jot down key strategies, questions, and responses, and keep the list close by during the discussion.

- ❖ **Ask open-ended questions—then wait.** Begin the post-screening discussion by asking an open-ended question that invites viewers to share the things that are most compelling to them, e.g.,
 - Thoughts?
 - Reactions?
 - Who wants to share what’s on their mind?
 - Who would like to share something that really fascinated/intrigued/captivated them?
 - What is your first reaction to the film?
 - Did you learn anything new?
 - What scenes, images or comments linger or stick with you?
 - What is *Eating Alaska* about to you?

Wait three to five seconds after each contribution before responding or calling on another person. This will give you and others a chance to reflect on what was said and formulate a response. You will find that wait time also encourages participants to elaborate on their ideas without prompting from you.

- ❖ **Avoid judgement and provide encouragement.** Keeping the discussion going depends as much on what you *don’t* say as what you do say. Rehearse nonjudgmental ways of conveying your interest and appreciation for what people have to say. You can provide encouragement through a wide range of verbal and nonverbal gestures—by listening carefully, wearing a thoughtful expression, or by acknowledging contributions with a simple “thank you,” “hmmm,” or nod. If a remark leaves you genuinely speechless, it is often best to simply acknowledge, paraphrase, or wear an engrossed expression—until you recover yourself.
- ❖ **Handle misguided or insensitive remarks—sensitively.** For both inexperienced and experienced facilitators, perhaps the greatest fear and challenge involves dealing with remarks that threaten the safety of a participant or convey negative feelings about someone in the film or the filmmaker. In many cases, simply asking the person to elaborate or clarify the comment, or to view the situation through a different lens, will prompt him or her to reevaluate the position—and give you and the group time to respond:
 - Tell us more about your thinking.
 - What evidence do you have to support your opinion that...?
 - I’m not sure I understand...
 - Imagine for a minute that this is your own community. How might your perception of the situation be different?

If a remark is truly offensive or hurtful—racist, sexist or elitist— and no one else challenges it, you have an obligation to others in the group to do so. Do this in the kindest possible way—doing your best to avoid embarrassing the speaker. You may want to begin by acknowledging how a person might think that, then follow with the missing information or a clarifying remark.

- Let me add some information...
 - I have some background that might be helpful...
 - I’ve had a different experience...
 - I’m wondering how that fits with the view that...
- ❖ **Broaden participation through partner or small group dialogue.** Brief partner or small group conversations can be used to jumpstart the discussion during a lull, diffuse tension, or give everyone a voice when many people are eager to talk at once. Interesting ideas shared

with a partner or small group generally find their way to the whole group via another participant, even when the originator is reluctant to speak out him or herself.

- Let's turn to the person next to you and briefly share what's on our minds...
- People seem to feel pretty strongly about this. Let's take a step back and talk with one or two people at your table about...
- I'm going to throw this out to the group. Turn to a partner and tell that person what you're thinking...
- Talk with the people in your group about these points of view. What justification is there for each? What alternative interpretations might we be overlooking?

Potential Hot Spots

Eating Alaska contains content that may be disturbing to some audience members. Read the background information below and think about how you will respond to potential hot spots by providing information, or by turning the issue over to the group (e.g., What do other people think about this? Does anyone see this a different way? What are some reasons why people might feel that way? What might be some reasons for ___?) If you convey interest and respect for differing points of view, it is very likely that another audience member will come forward with a helpful perspective.

I. Isabella on Outsiders Living off the Land

In the film, Isabella tells Ellen, "I think we should have special privileges because we were here and that's how we lived." When Ellen asks, "So is there a way for non-Natives who really appreciate being here to live off the land and not get in the way?" Isabella shakes her head and says, "No." Some viewers perceive Isabella's comments as offensive. Some viewers have asked if the presenter or producers perceive this as "racist."

This segment is included in the film to point to another important element in the complexities surrounding choices we make concerning the way we eat. One theme throughout the film is the role of food in culture and identity, and the pressures on traditional foodways. When it comes to harvesting wild foods, be it fish, deer, moose or abalone, there are a lot of tensions around how to share the resources among traditional (subsistence), sport, and commercial uses.

Subsistence is a controversial political topic because managing subsistence involves making decisions about who has access to Alaska's valuable fish and wildlife resources. Disagreements about who should get rights to subsistence, how resources are allocated under subsistence provisions, and how such decisions are made, arise between and within different groups, including urban and rural Alaska residents, Natives and non-Natives, subsistence users and non-subsistence users, state lawmakers and other groups.

Subsistence wasn't a controversial legal issue until the late 1970's, when a growing population started putting pressure on Alaska's available fish and game, and resource managers were increasingly forced to choose between users.

Tensions escalated in 1971 when Congress drafted the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) to address Native land claims that complicated construction of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline. The act extinguished all prior Native subsistence hunting and fishing rights in exchange for almost \$1 billion in cash and 44 million acres of land. The acreage in the settlement did not begin to cover the area used traditionally by Natives in their subsistence pursuits.

When Congress passed ANCSA, Congress expressed the expectation that the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and the State of Alaska would take action to protect subsistence uses practiced by Alaska Natives. However, when Congress passed the landmark Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act [ANILCA] in 1980 to address those concerns, the law did not include a Native priority for subsistence hunting and fishing. Instead, it included a preference for all rural residents—both Native and non-Native,

many of whom had adopted a subsistence way of living.¹

- ❖ **Discussion.** Invite broad participation in the discussion of Isabella's comments to encourage alternate points of view. Ask questions such as:
 - Do you agree or disagree with Isabella? Why or why not?
 - What might be some reasons in favor of a Native preference?
 - Who should have access to resources such as fish and deer?
 - Should sportsmen have equal rights to these resources? What about people like Leslie in the film, for whom hunting offers a way of relating to the wilderness and "stretching the envelope?" (See the Goat Hunt scene at 39:50).
 - Under what circumstances might preferential treatment be fair and just?
 - What policies would you recommend for allocation of hunting and fishing rights?

Our Food is Our Tlingit Way of Life

In the film, Isabella tells Ellen, "I think we should have special privileges because we were here and that's how we lived." This activity allows viewers to better appreciate Isabella's perspective by exploring the Tlingit way of life as reflected in the Tlingit language.

- ❖ **Activity.** Tlingit names for plants, animals and ways of preparing food illustrate the role of hunting, fishing and gathering in the Tlingit way of life. Copy the list of Tlingit terms, cut them into strips and give a set to each partnership. Explain that there are no wrong answers, but partners should be able to explain the thinking behind their categories and talk about what they learned from the word activity about the diet, food and culture of the Tlingit people.²

<u>Tlingit Word</u>	<u>English Word</u>
Atxá	Food (a meal, any kind of food or snack)
K'únts'	Potato
Guwakaan	Deer
Xáat	Salmon
Chaatl	Halibut
Gáax'w	Herring eggs
Yáxwji daaw	Herring eggs on macrosistis kelp
Haaw	Herring eggs on hemlock branches
Né	Herring eggs on hair kelp
Kaháakw	Salmon eggs
T'á shaayí	King salmon heads
Yéin	Sea cucumber
Kanat'á	Blueberry
Tléikw kanéegwál'	Jam
Kóox	Chocolate lily roots, but also used to refer to modern rice

You can use some of the words in questions and sentences:

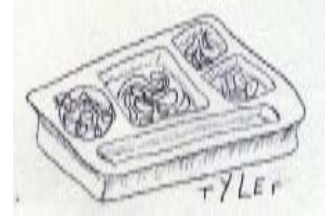
Gé ixá?	Do you eat _____?
Xaxá xá!	I do indeed eat it!
xaxá!	I eat _____!
Kaa xá gé?	Do people eat it?

Have partners share categories with the whole group. Facilitate a class discussion about what the names tell us about the Tlingit life way. How are Tlingit names for plants, animals and ways of preparing food similar to and different from plant, animal and food preparation words in the English language, or students' home language?

A Note on Pronunciation: A line under a G, X or K means it comes from the back of the throat. An apostrophe means that the sound is pinched in the mouth. The alphabet is pure phonics, no silent letters. Vowel key, English examples: Was, Saab, Ten, Eight, Hit, Teen, Put, Soon. There are only eight vowels.

II. Obesity, Weight and Access to Healthy Foods

In response to viewer perceptions of weight within the Tlingit population, consider the following information about Native Alaskan cultures, and the prevalence of obesity in the United States.



Historically in Tlingit Culture:

The Tlingit [and other Native Alaskans] developed a culture that is well adapted to the physical environment...Tlingit culture has developed over many centuries during which an incredible store of knowledge of the natural world has been amassed...

The traditional Tlingit diet contained many protein-rich foods, especially fish, game and shellfish. Even seaweed has notable amounts of protein. Although both fish and game have respectable fat content, it was the rendered oil of seal, eulachon [*Thaleichthys pacificus*, an oily saltwater fish], and herring that supplied a large proportion of the fat required in the diet. These foods were rich sources of nutrients; eulachon grease, in particular, stands out as an exceptional source of Vitamin A. (pp. 36-37, 40).

Consider also:

Throughout the United States, overweight and obesity have increased in people of all ethnic groups, all ages, and both genders. This is not an isolated threat to health, nor one limited to a particular population group. However, among some racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups, and within certain geographic regions, the prevalence of obesity and many obesity-related risk factors is especially high.

While personal choices play a role in the rise of obesity, they alone are not responsible for the epidemic we face today. Many children grow up surrounded by unhealthy foods at home and in school. Others lack access to safe places where they can play and be active. Some low-income neighborhoods have many fast-food restaurants, but few stores or markets that sell nutritious foods. And many Americans of limited economic resources simply can't afford to buy healthy foods, join health clubs, or participate in organized sports or physical activity programs.³

Urban studies have shown:

People in some communities have limited opportunities to make healthy food choices. For example:

- Fruit and vegetable consumption among African Americans increased 32 percent for each additional supermarket in the local community.⁴
- A 2002 study of more than 200 neighborhoods found that there are three times as many supermarkets in wealthy neighborhoods as in poor neighborhoods, and four times as many supermarkets in predominantly white neighborhoods as in predominantly African-American ones.⁵
- As a report called *Preventing Childhood Obesity* points out, there are a number of factors involved:

The choices individuals make about what they eat and their activity level have an undeniable role in the rise of overweight and obesity. But individuals exist within social systems and so are influenced by a variety of forces. Those at greatest risk of overweight and obesity, such as members of racial and ethnic minorities and lower-income groups, are often those subject to the greatest pressures. Reducing overweight and obesity in these communities will require a comprehensive focus.⁶

- ❖ **Deeper Discussion.** If your audience is interested in delving deeper into this issue, use questions such as the following to focus the discussion on issues of equity:

- What did you see in the film, the above-noted research and/or your own experience that might help explain unequal distribution of health-promoting and health-harming conditions, such as obesity and obesity rates among Native Alaskans?
- What has been responsible for the change in the traditional diet?
- What strengths in the Native community might be leveraged to reduce obesity and unhealthy eating among Native Alaskans?
- How can communities bring about food policies that protect the public good? What about in your community?

III. Is Hunting Cruel?

The scene of the unclean kill may disturb hunters and non-hunters alike. Vegetarians in the audience may be disturbed by the idea of killing and eating an animal at all.

Be aware that in the film, hunting serves as a metaphor for the complexities and dilemmas we face around food and food choices. If the issue of hunting comes up, try to bring it back to the question of issues we face around food and food choices and how we navigate these.

Consider:

Hunting and gathering (sometimes known as foraging) is the way that humans lived for ninety percent of our species' time on earth. People lived in smallish tribes, moving frequently from place to place, gathering wild plants and hunting animals. The rise of settled agriculture about ten thousand years ago put an end to hunting-gathering communities in most parts of the world.

In his tribute to deer, *Heart and Blood: Living with Deer in America*, Alaskan author and hunter Richard Nelson reflects on his relationship to the deer he stalks:

...I haven't brought a rifle, not even for protection against blundering into a bear. I've come here to hunt only with my eyes, a luxury of the twentieth-century world, where freezers and grocery stores foster the illusion that life sustains itself without taking another life. Today I nourish only my soul, and the beauty of this encounter is what feeds me. I wonder if hawks and herons, wolves and killer whales are ever astounded by the loveliness, the grace, the perfection of their prey (p. 7).

Later in the book, Nelson asks all of us to confront our unwitting relationship to deer, whether we are hunters or not:

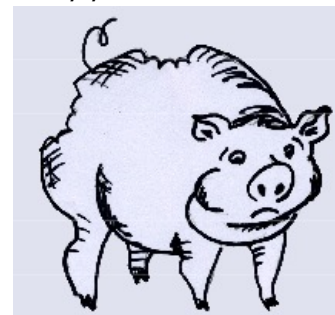
Tracing our connections to deer can reveal disquieting realities and unexpected dilemmas. Soybeans, for example, provide such nutritionally meritorious foods as tofu, soymilk, soy sauce, soy hot dogs, and soy burgers, as well as the soy ink widely used in publishing. Writer Pagan Kennedy calls soy "the most politically correct legume" and "the saintly bean." But deer also love soybeans, and for this reason, hunting is an essential part of soybean cultivation.

...Whenever any of us sit down for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or a snack, it's likely that deer were killed to protect some of the food we eat and the beverages we drink. This is true for everyone: city dwellers and suburbanites; men, women, and children; omnivores and vegetarians; hunters, nonhunters, and antihunters (p. 310).

Hunting has personal and social significance, particularly among Native Alaskans, and its role in healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating, as suggested by the following passage from Seth Kanter's book, *Shopping for Porcupine: A Life in Arctic Alaska*:

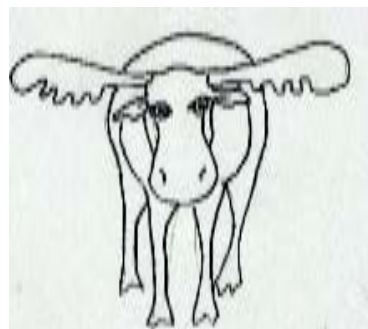
We are living through big change, hard times in a new way. We still eat a lot of meat, fish and berries. The dying of subsistence as a *lifestyle* doesn't negate the importance of wild food from the land, for many of us the essential to feeling and being alive. The gathering of wild food has changed but still provides nourishment to our spirits too, something that doesn't seem to be coming off those airplanes (pp. 163-164).

- ❖ **Invite a discussion** about the complexities of hunting using questions such as:
 - How did you feel about the way hunting was portrayed in the film?
 - Do you think the film romanticized hunting?
 - What might be some benefits of hunting? What are some challenges?
 - How did you feel about Ellen’s willingness to eat meat while not being able to pull the trigger?
 - How do you think she felt about her decision?
 - The scene of the unclean kill is disturbing to hunters and non-hunters alike. Why do you think Ellen included the scene in the film?
 - How do you feel about hunting? What factors influence the way you feel about hunting—e.g., who is hunting, why and for what? What guidelines would you develop to make hunting sustainable, meaningful and healthy?
 - Some organizations and individuals claim that healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating requires us to reduce or eliminate meat from our diet. Do you agree or disagree?
 - Where do you personally draw the line for eating meat? Do you eat or use any animal products? Fish? Chicken? Industrially processed meats? Why?



If viewers are interested in pursuing this topic, use the following activity to explore further.

IV. Eating Meat? The Role of Culture in Healthy, Meaningful and Sustainable Eating



Guidelines for healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating often advise reducing or eliminating meat. For example, Prevention Institute’s Strategic Alliance suggests, “In reality, the health-giving properties of food come from whole and minimally processed foods—mostly from plants—that contain a wide variety of naturally occurring nutrients.” A website advocating a diet rich in whole plant food states, “In modern Western societies, diets rich in high-fat, high-cholesterol animal products have been associated with many chronic illnesses and health problems, including heart disease, hypertension, obesity, and certain types of cancer” (www.appetiteforprofit.com/faqseatingwell.html).

Yet a traditional high protein, high fat diet was and is a healthy, meaningful and sustainable way to eat for many Native peoples, while a Western diet is associated with dramatic increases in diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

- ❖ **Deeper discussion on** the role of cultural and regional factors in healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating, with a focus on eating meat:
 - What, if any, are the absolutes for a healthy, meaningful and sustainable diet?
 - What elements of healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating are flexible and negotiable?
 - What is the role of culture in healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating?
 - What guidelines would you create for healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating in your family, peer group, or community?

Have viewers work in groups to create a healthy, meaningful and sustainable food policy that takes into account the needs, desires and traditions of their family, peer group, or community.

V. Balancing Acts: Contaminants and Fossil Fuels

In the film, Ellen visits with a statewide organization, the Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT). ACAT is active in cleaning up military and industrial sites, like the one Vi talks about on St. Lawrence Island, and advocating for clean air, clean water, and toxic-free food. The goal of this scene is to point out the connection between the health of our bodies and the health of the environment, and the paradox of development and wilderness in Alaska. Alaska is a state with an economy that has been dependent on using and selling resources, from oil and minerals to fish and lumber. It is also a place where people eat a lot of food harvested from the wild, especially in rural, predominately Alaska Native communities.

This scene can raise questions such as: Does this mean all wild foods are not safe to eat? Is it worse in Alaska than other places? Can it statistically be proven that the contaminants are causing cancer? What is happening on St. Lawrence Island now?

The cleanup of former defense sites, like the one in the film, continues. "The benefits of wild foods," as Vi says, "outweigh the risks." Traditional foods are an essential part of individual and community health, and have a higher nutritional value than most available commercial foods. The change in lifestyle for Alaska Natives has included health challenges like smoking, and a decrease in physical exercise. The rise of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer makes it all the more important to study not only the risks, but also the benefits of a traditional diet.

While it can be difficult to prove what causes cancer and other illnesses, there are studies showing the adverse impact of contaminants such as DDT, PCBS, dioxins and heavy metals, including mercury and lead, on human health. There are ongoing efforts to measure, locate and better understand the risks associated with environmental contaminants and the potential effects on wildlife and humans. It is important to monitor for contaminants, especially in the Arctic, because the north has become a hemispheric sink for global contaminants transported through atmospheric and oceanic currents. It is also true that Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) accumulate in fat; heavy metals generally accumulate in organs and muscle, and tend to accumulate in the fatty tissues of wildlife. People in the north tend to eat more organ meats and fats than people further south.

The following is taken from a May 2009 statement by the Indigenous Caucus, which Vi belongs to, for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, "POPs" treaty:

Indigenous Peoples have stressed that the total elimination of the nine new chemicals will have a direct positive impact on safeguarding our health and way of life. Arctic Indigenous Peoples suffer levels of POPs contamination in blood and breast milk that are among the highest of any population on earth, even though these chemicals have never been produced in the Arctic.

Every individual pollutes and contributes to pollution, so we have to do what we can to keep our environment clean and safe for fish and wildlife. Positive examples are villages and cities working to ban or use fewer plastic bags, organizing community wide cleanups, and vehicle maintenance checks to keep cars from adding to the pollution problem.

❖ Discussion can be encouraged by such questions as:

- How do you think this scene fits into the film? Explain.
- What concerns do you have for the safety of food, water and air in your community?

Another issue that may surface in discussions is the amount of fossil fuels used to harvest wild food. Whether we are talking about food miles of plums from Chile, or the fuel or the miles traveled to dive for sea cucumbers, the issue of our dependency on fossil fuels is a theme throughout the film. This is included to remind us of the contradictions in the way we eat today. Raising this issue underscores how

much oil has become a part of our way of life.

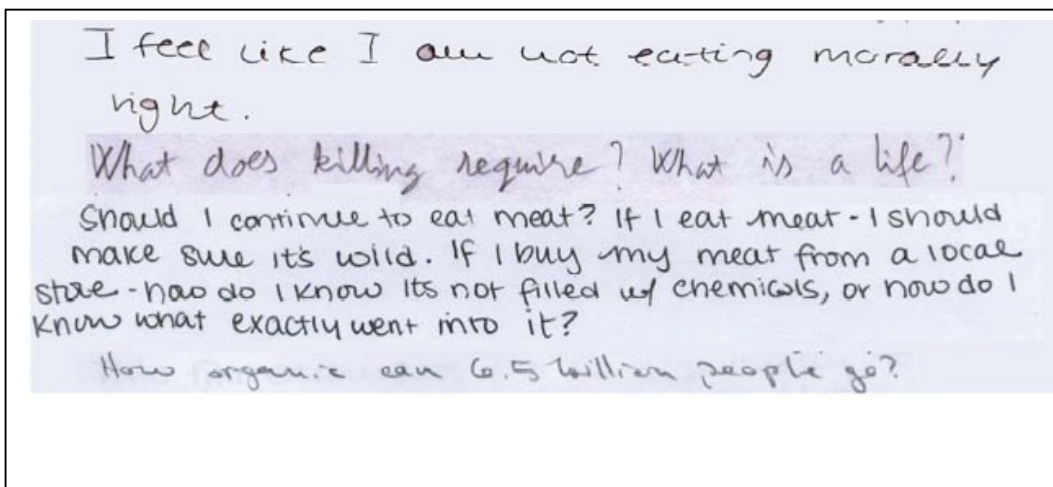
After seeing *Eating Alaska*, one elder who grew up in Nome said it reminded him that the way they used to fish and harvest other foods was not only not based on buying engines and fuel, but on paddling and sailing. Older methods of harvesting wild foods involved more exercise and typically fishing and hunting in groups, which was more communal. Progress is something most of us embrace and it makes sense to do so, however, rising fuel prices have led to changes. People are hunting closer to home and doing multiple kinds of subsistence at the same time. It has also made it difficult for people to get out and harvest the foods they depended on before barges brought fuel to remote communities.

According to some studies, total fossil fuel use in the United States has increased twentyfold in the last three decades (see <http://dieoff.org/page136.htm>).

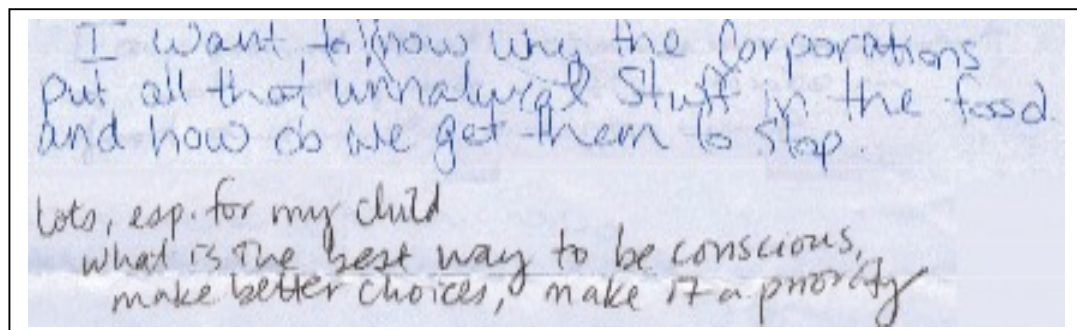
❖ **Pertinent questions:**

- What do you think about the contradictions of fossil fuel use in the film?
- How do you think we can cut down on the amount of fuel that we “eat” and use daily?

Viewers respond to the question: “What concerns does this raise for you?”



I feel like I am not eating morally right.
What does killing require? What is a life?
Should I continue to eat meat? If I eat meat - I should make sure it's wild. If I buy my meat from a local store - how do I know it's not filled w/ chemicals, or how do I know what exactly went into it?
How organic can 6.5 billion people go?



I want to know why the corporations put all that unnatural stuff in the food and how do we get them to stop.
lots, esp. for my child
what is the best way to be conscious, make better choices, make it a priority

4. For Educators

“What can educators do to foster real intelligence? We can attempt to teach the things that one might imagine the earth would teach us: silence, humility, holiness, connectedness, courtesy, beauty, celebration, giving, restoration, obligation, and wildness.”

— David W. Orr

This section offers suggestions for using *Eating Alaska* in educational settings. While these activities were designed for use in schools and the classroom, they are also effective for promoting dialogue in other settings. You can choose one or two of the suggested activities to use before, during and after the film.

Content Standards

Eating Alaska can be adapted to address content standards in a wide range of subjects, including Health, Language Arts, Art, History, Science, Geography, Cultural Standards and World Languages. It fits well within the concepts of Place-Based Education and Community-Oriented Schooling, which include a multidisciplinary approach and the belief that education should prepare students to live and work to sustain the cultural and ecological integrity of the places they inhabit. National standards are on the web at: www.ed.gov/nclb. Alaska State standards are at: www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/. Learn more about Place-Based Education at www.promiseofplace.org. The following is a small sampling of potential standards met by viewing and discussing *Eating Alaska*. Ideas for tie-ins come up throughout the guide.

Geography

- Map where your food comes from, both locally and afar. This is a great way to have students experience the concept of map scale and also to label and use a map.
- Consider the geography of our northernmost state, its weather, the history and cultures of people in the film and how that compares and contrasts to where you live.
- Consider how changes in technology and transportation impact diet, activity, and social, cultural and economic norms.

English/Language Arts and Arts

- Talk about the structure and themes in *Eating Alaska*. Describe the strategies the filmmaker uses to tell a story and engage viewers.
- Look for new vocabulary in the film and use the Glossary on page 35.
- Use words from the film and activities for spelling lessons.
- Pick an issue or theme about food, culture and the environment, that comes up in the film and do more research. Write an article, a poem or make your own five-minute film.

Science

- Talk about the transfer and transformation of food, matter and energy.
- Study the life cycle of the salmon and learn more about sea cucumbers and mountain goats.
- Discuss cultural knowledge as part of understanding the natural world.

Health

- Discuss the choices Ellen made in the film and talked to people about.
- Reflect on the impact of those choices on health and well being.

Cultural Standards

- Compare and contrast subsistence and food traditions in your community.
- Watch the film and prompt students to list questions about subsistence and changes in obtaining food. Invite a local elder into the classroom to interview, and to help students acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction.

Pre –Screening: Setting the Table



These activities are intended to build interest and background knowledge.

• Potluck

Have students bring favorite foods or a snack that fits the themes from *Eating Alaska*—homegrown, local or organic.



• Expert guest

Invite a speaker to the class such as a master gardener, elder, or farmer.

📎 Journal Activity

Use one or more of the following prompts:

- What does the phrase “You are what you eat” mean to you?
- Do you agree or disagree with this phrase?
- If you are what you eat, what are you? What are we as a culture?
- What is your favorite food? Why?

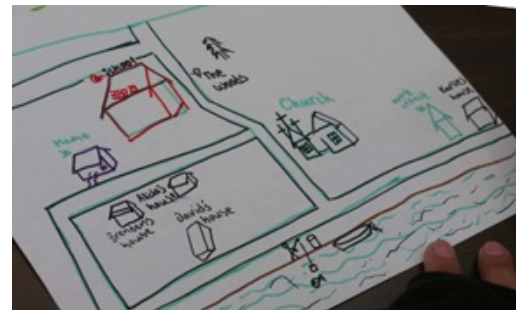
👉 Break into small groups and list:

- 5-10 foods you and your family buy regularly from the store
- 5-10 foods you obtain from gardening, gathering, fishing, hunting or sharing with friends and family
- What makes a “good” or healthy food

Compare and contrast.

↔ Community Mapping

- Find a map of your region. Make 8.5 x 11” copies to hand out. Students can also create their own maps.
- Ask students to show where they go to fish, hunt, gather, garden or recreate. They can mark areas they consider special or wild, where, for example, they have seen caribou cross a river or salmon spawn. They can code the map with different colored pens or stickers.
- Have students write about a special place they have marked. What is this place like? Why is it special? Ask them to share what they wrote and learned from mapping their world. Talk about how the maps connect place to where they get food.



one of my favorite spots. It's a Muskogee Valley where many herbs and special trees grow. There are some Juniper trees in the spring but usually closer I like to go there to relax. It's really pretty. It has a crowd of Juniper trees.

I. Note-taking: I Saw/I Thought

I Saw/I Thought note-taking encourages deeper viewing and discussion by asking students to separate what they see from what they think. Note-taking ensures that every student has material to contribute to a discussion of the film, even if the discussion doesn't happen until the following day. Feel free to encourage students to add their observations, questions and reactions to the note sheet.

Directions for I Saw/I Thought note-taking can be modified to target particular content standards. Geography teachers might ask students to take notes with an eye toward understanding and evaluating how humans and the physical environment interact. A Health teacher might have students look at how the film covers issues of wellbeing, and how health and wellbeing are effected by eating habits, physical fitness, personal hygiene, harmful substances, safety, and environmental conditions.

Excerpts from the I Saw/I Thought activity with high school students in several Southeast Alaskan communities:

I Saw/Heard (notes and quotes from the film)	I Thought/I Wonder (my thoughts, questions, connections, comments)
PEOPLE RESPECTED & LEVED OFF THE LAND. -SAW HOW SP ELLEN & SPENCER CAUGHT SHRIMP -JENILEN IS A LOT HEALTHIER THAN A COW GROWN ON A LOT.	-I LIKE THE THING SHE SAID ABOUT, IF YOU EAT FROM YOUR OWN ENVIRONMENT, YOU BECOME A PART OF IT.

I Saw/Heard (notes and quotes from the film)	I Thought/I Wonder (my thoughts, questions, connections, comments)
Native ^(Isabella) woman saying she did not think outsiders could respect the land in the same.	This was interesting. Both can respect/dis respect. understand where she is coming from.

I noticed that the deer that had 20 horns the horns had fur on them and the horns told how old it was every horn from each side is an year that it's lived.

I Saw/Heard (notes and quotes from the film)	I Thought/I Wonder (my thoughts, questions, connections, comments)
became a vegetarian — never saw someone hunt — left her deer she had NO idea. native peoples lived off what they got. or just got enough she wouldn't actually kill a deer "It's alot to take a life"	... weird ... also weird I've been around it for so long I didn't realize not everyone sees what we Alaskans see. she had no idea what to do. It was slightly funny you only need what you need. we don't just kill things to kill things me neither... I'll eat it, skin it whatever... but killing is different. yes

teaching nutrition why we don't get taught about nutrition something like they did

While Viewing: The Meal

II. Observations and Stopping Points

As students are watching the film, have them record their observations and thoughts on their I Saw/I Thought note sheets.

Managing notes during the viewing. Students are likely to become absorbed in the film and forget to take notes. Pause at pivotal points or transitions to allow students to add to their notes.

Suggested stopping points:

Time	Stop after you hear:	What we see on the screen:	Notes
2:00	Ellen: You'll need your saw, of course. My saw.	Ellen puts down the book	Ellen's lifestyle change
7:00	Isabella: It better be cooked in the middle or you're fired.	Fry bread followed by fade to black	Allocation of subsistence resources
14:22	Ellen: I can understand now what people mean when they say eating from the place you live makes you part of it.	Deer grazing	You are what you eat Food Chain
18:42	Girls: I love the fair/Love the fair	Girls eating popcorn at the state fair followed by fade to black	Comfort foods Public eating, Fast Foods
21:06	Delisa: We just ask that the food be used for the nourishment of our bodies. Amen.	Grace over vegetarian meal followed by fade to black	Vegetarianism
29:26	Vi: These are all possible health effects from PCBs.	Fox foraging followed by fade to black	Toxins
34:58	Ellen: Eating local means being patient, especially in a time and a place where the climate is changing so drastically.	Hand picking berries, berry bushes	Hunting caribou in Kotzebue Climate Change Unpredictability of harvesting your own food
38:35	Student: So I'd like to know how my meat became cooked and how it was processed, like who cut it up.	Pretzels followed by fade to black	Home economics class Student point of view Culture and experience
43:23	Ellen: Still, getting stuck, being uncomfortable, dealing with the unpredictable is part of living here and harvesting wild food.	Trees seen from the plane, followed by fade to black	Hunting goat by plane
50:01	Chloe: I'm surprised; the kids are excited! They spent that whole hour—sixth graders—in a grocery store. They want to know what they're eating.	Chloe followed by fade to black	Kids at culture camp and in a sixth grade classroom learn about foods
End	Play to end of film		Complexities of Ellen and Spencer's relationship to food

After Viewing: Digesting

Structure discussion around students' observations and interpretations of the film. Begin by posing an open-ended question such as, "Who would like to share something from their notes?" If a student contributes something from the left hand "I Saw" column, ask: "And what did you make of that? What was your interpretation? What questions did you have about that?" If the student shares an opinion, question or interpretation from the right column of the note sheet, ask a question such as: "What did you see in the film that made you think/wonder that? What did you write under the "I Saw" column?"

III. Quick Write: What I Saw/I Thought

After the film, if students have not used the note sheet, have them spend a few minutes writing about the film. Use prompts such as:

- What did I think of the film?
- Where did I agree with the film?
- Where did I disagree?
- What questions do I have about what I saw?
- What does this film have to do with me?
- What are some non-healthy eating practices in my family, school and community?
- What are some damaging environmental practices and conditions in my family, school and community?
- What are some things I can do in my family, school and community to encourage healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating?
- What are some things we can do in my home, school or community to use fewer resources and be more sustainable?

IV. Group Share

Invite students to share their quick writes. Use students' thoughts, questions and insights as the basis for discussion.

I would like to see how different people from all over the world ate, like from off-there land, and how important it is to them.

I wonder if supporting local fishermen or being vegetarian is more impactful on worldwide ecology.

V. Talking Points

Use the following discussion prompts to explore important themes suggested by the film.

Sustainability

- What does it mean to eat sustainably?
- What does sustainable eating look like in Alaska? What are the resources for eating sustainably in Alaska? What are the challenges to eating sustainably in Alaska?
- What does sustainable eating look like in our community? What are the resources for eating sustainably in our community? What are the challenges to eating sustainably in our community?
- What is "just food?"
- Answers might include: food produced without causing undue ecological damage, food grown under production systems that allow workers and farmers to earn livable wages, food that's healthy, accessible, and affordable to everyone who eats.



Healthy Eating

- What does it mean to be healthy?
- What are the components of a healthy meal?

Probe for social, environmental and nutritional aspects of a healthy meal—e.g., around food production, preparation and consumption. Follow the discussion by having students illustrate their vision of healthy eating. Illustrations might be drawings, comics, paintings, collages, or even dramatizations. Challenge students to consider healthy production, preparation and consumption of food in their illustrations, as well as healthy nutrition.



Vegetarianism/Veganism

“Becoming a vegetarian is a highly practical and effective step one can take toward ending both the killing of nonhuman animals and the infliction of suffering upon them.”

-Peter Singer, from *Animal Liberation*

- Why might a person choose to be a vegetarian or vegan?
- What might be some benefits of being a vegetarian or vegan?
- What might be some challenges?
- Would you want to be a vegetarian or vegan? Why or why not?
- What do you think about the quote above? Is that why Ellen became a vegetarian?
- What do you think of the vegans in the film?

Ellen and Spencer’s Subsistence Living

- How do you feel about Ellen and Spencer’s ways of acquiring and processing foods?
- In what way is Ellen and Spencer’s lifestyle healthy, meaningful and sustainable?
- In what ways is Ellen and Spencer’s lifestyle *not* healthy, meaningful and sustainable?
- What aspects of Ellen and Spencer’s way of life appeal to you?
- Would you like to live that way? Why or why not?

The Meaning of Subsistence Living

Have students consider the following statements by Native Historian, Richard G. Newton. Display the quotes so they are visible on a PowerPoint, overhead projector, or poster board:

“Of course, it makes economic sense to supplement one’s income by putting up fish, meat and berries. But that is not subsistence living as we have known it in the past.”

“Fishing streams, hunting grounds, and berry patches were more than a means of filling our ‘minimum daily requirements.’⁷

-Richard Newton

Have a discussion, posing questions such as:

- What do you think Richard Newton is saying?
- What else do you think is part of subsistence living, as Native peoples practiced it in the past? What evidence did you see/hear in the film related to this?
- What else besides filling a “minimum daily [nutritional] requirement is part of subsistence living as it is practiced today, whether by Native or non-Native peoples?
- What did you see/hear in the film to make you think this?

- What are some factors that might contribute to differences in the way Native and non-Native people view and participate in subsistence activities?
- What does “subsistence living” mean?

Hunting

- How do you feel about hunting?
- What might be some benefits of hunting? What might be some challenges?
- How do you feel about Ellen’s willingness to eat meat while refusing to pull the trigger?
- How do you think she felt about her decision?
- Why do you think Stacy was so eager for Ellen to pull the trigger?
- Has the film changed the way you think about hunting and/or eating meat?

Gender

- In the film, (at 33.50) Langford makes a remark about “too much women’s lib.”
- How do you feel about women and girls hunting? Why?
- What are some reasons why women and girls might hunt?
- What are some challenges for women and girls who hunt? (Probe for socio-psycho challenges as well as physical challenges)
- Do you think Ellen’s reluctance to pull the trigger was influenced by her gender?
- Why do you think gender is or isn’t an influence?

V. Trade-Offs and Dilemmas

Food Choices/Food Scenarios

Eating Alaska underscores trade-offs involved in eating healthy, meaningful and sustainable foods. Explore the nutritional, environmental and social trade-offs.

- Discuss the benefits and burdens of each choice.
- Decide which option you would take and explain why.



Sample Scenarios. Chose one, two or make up a relevant scenario for where you live:

- 1) You live in rural Alaska where there is no road access. You just learned about a farm subscription program where you can receive a weekly box of fresh, organic produce flown from Washington State. The farm grows some of its produce, but also supplements the box with produce grown at other organic farms, some as far away as Chile. You have little control of the content of the box—you get what is in season. The cost of the box is \$50/week.
- 2) You buy your produce at the local grocery store. The store carries a wide range of produce, including some organic produce, plastic bags of organic lettuce, baby carrots, apples—but most of the produce is grown by conventional methods. Produce is expensive. The food is shipped by barge, one of the most energy-efficient forms of transportation.
- 3) You have to choose between buying organic apples from Chile and conventional apples grown on a local, family-owned farm. Which would you choose and why?
- 4) You have the choice between driving to the organic grocery store across town or walking to your neighborhood grocery store. Which do you choose, and why?
- 5) Viewer’s option. What are dilemmas in your community?



What's Your Value?

Have partners or small groups prioritize the importance of the following from highest to lowest, and explain their decisions alternatively, students might rate each according to a scale of high, medium or low priority. See Glossary on page 35.

- grown, caught or processed at home
- locally produced and in-season
- organic
- sustainable
- fair trade
- vegetarian/vegan
- ethical eating and animal raising
- taste/enjoyment
- food with personal meaning (cultural heritage)



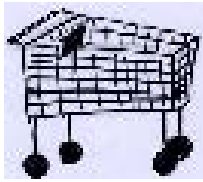
After students have shared their thinking, ask the class what other factors influence food choices that they would add to the list.

VI. Follow Up Activities

"Research says 70 percent of shoppers bring lists into supermarkets, but only 10 percent adhere to them."

-Marion Nestle, Nutritionist and Author

The Grocery Store is Our Western Way of Life



Food is essential for our survival. It is also part of our cultural identity, a reflection of who we are. Looking at how we produce, market, prepare, and consume food reveals much about our culture and values, as well as how we eat.

By looking closely at specific foods and how they are produced, presented/marketed, prepared and eaten, students become aware of factors that influence their eating habits. This activity can help lay the foundation for more informed decision-making about food and the effects of food choices on their own wellbeing and on the natural environment.

If you cannot go to the grocery store, select a variety of food items to bring into the classroom. You may want to include bulk foods like beans or rice and traditional foods like seaweed, smoked or dried fish, as well as commercially processed grocery store foods. Include items that highlight connections and disconnects including potatoes dug from the community garden to food in individual, microwavable portions. You might want to include "health food" items such as granola bars, and junk food, such as Pop Tarts, which share the same primary ingredients: flour, sugar and vegetable oil.

Model how to systematically examine a food item for evidence of how foods are produced, presented/marketed, prepared and eaten and how to record observations using the I Saw/I Thought note sheet. Show how even small and seemingly insignificant details can be revealing. For example, the number of servings reflects social norms about the number of people likely to share the food. Model in enough detail to convey how to "read" a food item, but not so much that you deprive students of their own discoveries. Touch on each of the categories:



- Production
- Presentation/marketing
- Preparation
- Consumption



Name: Date: Title: What I saw and thought about how this food is produced, marketed, prepared and consumed	
I Saw...	I Thought...
Food item 1: Progresso Soup Vegetable Classics Lentil "Servicing Size 1 cup (241g)" "Servings Per Container about 2" Label has drawing of fresh vegetables—green pepper, tomato, onion, garlic, chili pepper, fresh greens, but the ingredients do not include all these things Label says "Full Serving of Vegetables" Pop-top can Packaged in tin can "Ready to Serve/Do Not Add Water" Distributed by a company in Minnesota	Small servings—I could easily eat the whole can myself! Not for people who do a lot of physical activity. Only one or two people will eat this—not for a family or group. People often eat alone these days The picture on the label does not match the ingredients. The only similar ingredients are tomato paste, onion powder—and those are processed, not fresh. The manufacturers know that people prefer fresh onions to onion powder—otherwise the label would have a picture of onion powder! Is this misleading? Marketed to people who know they should eat vegetables Does not need a can opener. Can be opened and consumed away from the kitchen—e.g., at work. I picture someone sitting at their desk eating this Made to last a long time No preparation required. For people who don't have the time or desire to cook Was it made there? That's a long way! If not, where was it made—and where did the ingredients come from and why isn't that on the can? Like the student said in the film, I like to know where my food comes from.

Have partners rotate so that each partnership examines all five or six food items, or assign each partnership a different item or pair of items to examine, depending on time and preference.

Ask students to record their observations on a double-entry "I Saw/I Thought" journal, where the left column is a factual record of what they see, and the right column records their personal reactions—thoughts, reasoned judgments, questions, opinions.

Have partners share with the whole class. Record partners' observations on a whole class I Saw/I Thought chart.

Have a discussion about what the food items tell us about the way we eat. Ask questions such as:

- What did you notice about how foods are produced?
- How were they presented? Marketed? Prepared? Consumed?
- What feelings do you have about what you discovered? What surprised you? Bothered you?

- Pleased you? Interested you? Why?
- What links do you see between these food items and our culture, social customs and lifestyle?
 - What factors do you think influence our food choices?
 - How might this activity affect your attitudes and choices around food and eating, if at all?

Name:	
Date:	
Title:	
I Saw...	I Thought...(thoughts, reasoned judgments, questions, opinions)
What we noticed about how foods are... produced: marketed: prepared: consumed:	

This is inspired by Center for Ecoliteracy's *Rethinking School Lunch: A Visual Guide Linking Food, Culture, Health and the Environment*).

● The Things They Said

The following two activities use quotes from *Eating Alaska* to spark discussion of important ideas suggested by the film.

Agree/Disagree

"Draw" a line across the room using tape, string or your imagination. Designate one end of the line "strongly agree" and the other "strongly disagree." Read aloud one of the following quotes/dialogues and ask students to stand along the continuum according to the strength of their agreement or disagreement. Invite students to explain why they have taken the positions they have taken. Repeat with additional quotes.

(6:27) Isabella: *"I think we should have special privileges because we were here and that's how we lived, you know."*

Ellen: *So is there a way for non-Natives who really appreciate being here to live off the land and not get in the way?*

Isabella: [shakes head] *Nope.*

(20:35) Delisa: *"I would still choose to give up meat before I gave up the processed food and there's a reason for that and that is because I think there is a basic value in not exploiting animals and the earth."*

(30:18) Ellen: *"I like cleaning the deer, I just can't bring myself to shoot it."*

(38:02) Student in Kotzebue cooking class: *"I'd like to know how my meat became cooked, how it was processed, like who cut it up."*

(39: 45) Ellen: *"I really think hunting is not all about hunting."*

Leslie: *"For me definitely, it's a way to get out there, stretch the envelope, see beautiful terrain."*

Ellen: *"What about the meat? You get the meat and it's meaningful meat."*

Leslie: *"Absolutely, and we use all of it. But my family would be pretty hungry on my work schedule from the product of my hunting."*

(47:05) Girl at the Culture camp: *"You have to respect the food. Like you always have to thank the tree before you cut the tree down and thank the fish before you catch it because they're giving their life for you."*

(51:21) Ellen: *"While sea cucumbers are eaten locally, most commercially harvested cucumbers are bound for Korea to be processed and shipped to other Asian markets for food and medicine. We're burning at least 100 gallons of fuel this trip to send food that's close to home to people far from here."*

(52:10) Spencer [about deer hunting]: *"I don't think there's any reason for you to do something that's not in your nature. I feel real attached to it—learning more about the deer, where they'll be, when they'll be there. I'm taking the karma on myself about what I'm eating."*

(52:32) Ellen: *"It's a time I could take the gun, but I pass it once again to Spencer."*

Magnetic Statements

Write each of the following quotes/dialogues on a piece of paper and post them around the room. Have students circulate and read each quote/dialogue. Have students stand next to a quote/dialogue that speaks to them. Ask students to have a discussion with classmates who have chosen the same quote.

- Why did you choose this quote?
- What do you think it means?
- What would you like to say to the person/people who said this?
- What questions would you like to ask the person/people who said this?
- What other person/people would you talk with about this issue?

(14:00) Ellen: "My time hunting has strengthened my sense of connection to this place. I can understand now what people mean when they say eating from the place you live makes you part of it. I think too of the contrast between our fresh venison dinner and the food we shop for. Much of it comes by plane or barge from at least a thousand miles away... So is the right thing to eat the local deer, or the tofu made with soy beans from thousands of miles away?"

(24:10) Spencer: "I think that as a resource extractor, I have to watch out for my future and we all do. We're all out here trying to catch these salmon, if we don't have a good habitat for the salmon to return to, then we're not going to have a future. And then, if we over-fish our resources, then we're not going to have a future...Not just my future, but I'll be long dead and hopefully this fishery will still be going, just like it has been for a couple of hundred years, you know."

(26:57) Ellen: "I don't think people realize doing something far away from here, how it's impacting people here, especially in the north."

Pam: "These chemicals are produced and used hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of miles away from where we are here and yet they are carried via wind and ocean currents into the north where they accumulate in the bodies of wildlife and ultimately people who rely on traditional foods. It's toxic trespass."

(35:04) Ellen: "Elders tell me they had to hunt and gather as a matter of survival. But things changed. The lure of packaged convenience foods, combined with other modern pressures, make it harder and sometimes less appealing for locals to go out and get their own foods."

(38:02) Ellen: "Can you imagine not getting any of your own food, buying everything from the store?"

Student in cooking class: "That wouldn't be very cool."

Ellen: "Why's that?"

Student in cooking class: "Because I'd like to know how my meat became cooked, how it was processed, like who cut it up."

Food Mapping and Storytelling

In the film, we see maps of Alaska made from local foods. Have individuals or partners create maps using foods that represent their community, state or personal eating preferences. After a gallery walk where everyone has a chance to see all the collages, have a map-eating feast. This activity might also be done as a drawing, painting or photo collage.

Alternative: Have students write a creative biography, autobiography or poem about one food item, following it from "birth" to its appearance on the table. Here is a sample poem by Alan Peacock from a British collection called *Open-Mouthed Food Poems* (p 14):



Asparagus
Straight up
like a gift of special pencils tied with ribbon;
the first taste of summer
for a two month season.

Tipped
and steamed, creamed or griddled Jamie
style
with olive oil, butter and pepper,
every chef's favourite.
Some
will say it tastes like tough, weird grass,
preferring frozen peas
with a crozzled steak.

But most
have never even known the taste of green;
waiting, expecting nothing
under shadeless sun.

What energy
And water, what air-miles, year after year,
to guarantee such luxuries,
while pickers have no garden, home, or
school,
not even a pencil.
Straight up.



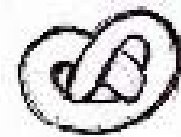
Cluckwan, Alaska potato harvest



• **Cooking Class**

Invite students to share their responses to the scene of the high school cooking class where students were making pretzels while reflecting on the importance of traditional foods.

End the discussion by asking: What do you think students should be learning and cooking in cooking class?



Have students develop the outline for a high school cooking class curriculum that fosters and supports healthy, sustainable and culturally appropriate eating. Students may want to invite the home economics teacher to be part of this initiative.

Alternative: Have students develop a lesson or recipe for a high school cooking class based on healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating.

• **Interview Project**

Have students interview elders in their community about their food and eating practices of their youth. Design the interview to address issues around healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating. As a class, brainstorm possible interview questions for each of these categories.

Extension: Ask elders to share a favorite traditional food, food tradition or recipe as part of the interview. Compile these into a cookbook.

VII. More to Chew On: Healthy, Meaningful and Sustainable Eating

Have students read and critique a set of sustainable food guidelines, with special attention to how they view the particular traditions and needs of their own culture, region or community.

- What elements of the guidelines work in the context of their culture, region or community?
- What elements would they change?



Examples of sustainable food guidelines include:

Setting the Record Straight, a definition of healthful food that looks beyond nutrients to a food system where food is produced, processed, transported, and marketed in ways that are environmentally sound, sustainable and just:

<http://preventioninstitute.org/sa/settingtherecordstraight.html>

Make a Difference sustainable eating guidelines remind readers, “We vote three times a day. With every meal we can choose to help the environment or to harm it”:

www.sierraclub.org/truecostoffood/takeaction.asp

Eat Well and Save the Planet! This one-page summary of Sustain’s food guidelines is for consumers interested in eating greener, healthier and more ethical food (the website also has a sustainable food guide for kids with the same information in comic form):

www.sustainweb.org/sustainablefood/

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. This document, by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is intended to be a primary source of dietary health information for policymakers, nutrition educators, and health providers. Based on the latest scientific evidence, the 2005 Dietary Guidelines provides information and advice for choosing a nutritious diet, maintaining a healthy weight, achieving adequate exercise, and “keeping foods safe” to avoid foodborne illness:

www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines

Environmental Health and Justice



The Principles of Environmental Justice serves as a defining document for the grassroots movement for environmental justice. See:

www.akaction.org/environmental_justice1.htm. Do a whole class reading of the 17 principles, with each student taking responsibility for reading one principle. In preparation for the reading, have students research their principle, understand what it means and why it is an

issue, and find examples of violations and/or ways people have fought for environmental justice in their communities.

Invite students to share personal and consumer choices they might make to “challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to ensure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.”

- Consider the term “environmental justice”; what do you think it might mean? How might the idea of environmental justice apply to what you saw in the film?
- How can communities bring about policies that protect the public good? What are some actions people might take? What about in your community?

The Health of the Oceans and Fisheries



Buying fish or ordering it in a restaurant can raise a lot of questions. Is it safe? Are the oceans being over fished? What about destructive fishing practices? There are ocean-friendly seafood choices. If you are going to eat fish, wild-caught is preferable to farmed fish, writes Peter Singer in *"The Way We Eat; Why Our Food Choices Matter"* (p. 275). Look for the Marine Stewardship Council's "Fish Forever" seal, check

the species you are buying on "The Fish List" at www.thefishlist.org, or find out more in the fish section at Food and Safety Water Watch, www.foodandwaterwatch.org.

While there are tensions over how to divide access to resources between different user groups, fisheries in Alaska, as shown in the film, are well managed. When you buy fish from small operators, it is like supporting the organic farmer at a farmers' market. Wild fish, especially salmon, are healthy. Farmed fish can provide more affordable protein than wild fish, but fish from open net pens are not good for the environment. Thousands of fish concentrated in one area produce tons of waste that pollutes the water. Some "closed" pen operations, such as catfish and tilapia (species that are herbivorous), can be safe and sustainable. There are also some innovative projects that use aquaculture in greenhouses to raise fish. Milwaukee's Growing Power, a community-based urban food center, for example, is using plants as natural water filters for raising yellow perch. The Monterey Bay Aquarium Sea Food Watch website explains:

Around the world, people are eating more seafood than ever before. Demand is increasing due to growing populations, and because health-conscious consumers are choosing seafood more often. To help supply the global demand for seafood, people are raising fish, shrimp and oysters like farmers raise cattle and chickens. Today, nearly half of our seafood comes from farms. The ecological impact of fish farming depends on which species are raised, how they are raised and where the farm is located (www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/).

One issue that *Eating Alaska* does not touch on, but that is of growing concern, is ocean acidification. The impact this will have on fisheries is being investigated. The following is part of the abstract for a research project by high school students in Petersburg, Alaska:

Ocean acidification, or the decreasing pH levels in the ocean due to carbon dioxide from human sources, is an issue that is arising in our Alaskan waters today. Through a series of causes and effects, carbon dioxide that is being produced by human fossil fuel consumption is changing the ocean's food web in and around Petersburg, AK. The food web is the hierarchy of organisms that rely on each other to survive. Specific organisms, such as clams, crabs, squid, mussels and corals, are in danger due to ocean acidification. When dealing with ocean acidification it is important to understand how the dissolved carbon is moved throughout our oceans by what is known as the conveyor belt. The interaction of carbon dioxide, the nitrogen cycle and the phosphorous cycle, will reveal how carbon dioxide affects all of the food web by starting at the base, phytoplankton. However, there is a way to begin decreasing the amount of carbon dioxide that is released into the atmosphere and therefore the ocean. Various policies, including taxes on each ton of carbon dioxide put into the atmosphere and grants for fishers who make their boats more efficient, are just a few ways to decrease the levels of carbon dioxide that are being released into our atmosphere and our oceans. Ocean acidification could easily change the ocean and its chemistry, changing community structure in ways unknown. See: <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/nosb/index.html>.

Encourage students to learn more about ocean ecosystems and discuss:

- What activities are bad for the oceans?
- What are some steps we can take to protect the ocean and ocean wildlife?

5. Actions to Promote Healthy, Meaningful and Sustainable Eating

Thinking Globally, Acting at Home

Have a discussion about ways to move household members of all ages closer to the source, processing and preparation of food—whether conventional or subsistence. Talk about “food security” (see Glossary, p. 31) in your household and community, and what the ideal affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate and just local food system would look like where you live. Ask students and viewers to estimate and talk about:

- How much of the food on your shelves is local? How much did you get yourself?
- If barges, planes or other transportation broke down, how many days of food do you have?

Locally grown food is soaring in popularity. In the U.S. there are 5,274 active farmer’s markets. In 1994 there were 1,775. That growth represents an investment in health, local communities and economies.

- USDA-AMS Marketing Divisions

Analyze the True Cost of Food

In the film, Ellen wonders, “So is the right thing to eat the local deer, or the tofu made with soy beans from thousands of miles away?”

Find out where your food comes from and how it is grown, processed and marketed. Research the true cost of a meal or week of meals at home or school, factoring in the human and environmental (e.g., energy, water and toxins) costs of producing, processing, transporting and preparing your foods. Develop an action plan for reducing the human and environmental cost of foods in your home, school or community.



Grocery Store Campaign



“Grocery stores are a classroom for nutrition education and where nutritious behavior change can be encouraged.”
—Earline Griffith, M.A., R.D., Raley’s [Grocery Stores] Nutrition Specialist

In collaboration with local businesses, create attractive posters or educational materials (with coupons for healthy food items!) promoting healthy, meaningful and sustainable eating to display or hand out in local grocery stores and food establishments. Generate your own topic or use one of the following:

- ❖ Five A Day the Alaskan Way (www.takeheart.alaska.gov)
- ❖ Eat Locally
- ❖ Eat Organic
- ❖ Sustainable Seafood
- ❖ Fair Trade

Adopt a Food or Food Tradition



“How easy it is for us to lose who we are, to forget what we are made of, to get stuck far from where we know where best to live.”

-Gary Paul Nabhan

According to Slow Food USA, 93 percent of food diversity in the United States has been lost since 1900. Develop and implement a plan to preserve a local food or food tradition (vegetables, fruits and berries, nuts, cereals, cheeses, fish, shellfish, game, livestock, poultry, beverages, honey, spices, syrups, vinegars and more). Preservation efforts might also target social traditions, such as family style school lunches, community gardens or community meals, which make eating more meaningful.

- Encourage a local chef or restaurant to use heirloom or heritage foods.
- Grow heirloom fruits and vegetables in a family, school or community garden.
- Research and write an article about local foods and food traditions for a local newspaper or newsletter.
- Host a program about local foods and food traditions on a local radio or television station.
- Host a potluck featuring regional foods.
- Organize a field trip to seek out rare foods in your area.
- With a local botanist, organize a field trip to identify edible indigenous plants in your area.
- Start a recovery project for an endangered food or food production method.
- Become seed savers and organize seasonal events to exchange varieties with others in the community.
- Start a farm-to-school program with the objectives of serving healthy school lunches, improving student nutrition, providing health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local small (and hopefully organic!) farmers.
- Nominate foods and food traditions from your region to the US Ark of Taste, an international catalog of foods threatened by industrial standardization, the regulations of large-scale distribution and environmental damage.
- Join Slow Food USA and start or become active in your local chapter.

Resources:

Slow Food USA: www.slowfoodusa.org

Slow Food Ark of Taste: www.localharvest.org

Farm to School: www.farmtoschool.org/

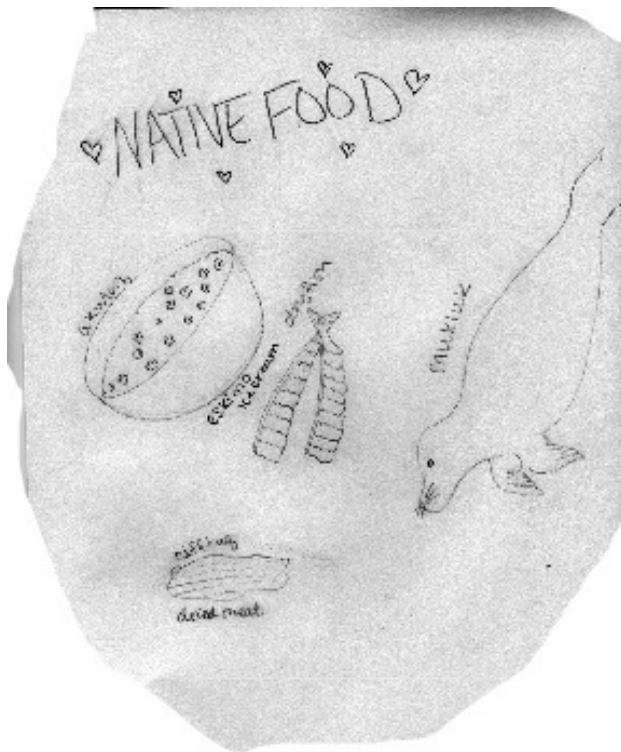
Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT)

RAFT invites communities—rural, urban, food enthusiast, farmer, fisher, historian, scientist or educator—to document the history and current status of America's endangered foods, and propose other foods for listing. Host a community discussion around the following questions:

- What place-based foods have unique traditions in your landscape, seascape and culture?
- Which of these foods offer flavors, textures and pleasures cherished in your foodshed that can't be found anywhere else on the continent?
- How many of these foods—traditionally foraged, fished, hunted or grown—might now be at risk in their home place?
- What can we do to collectively ensure their survival, and to support their original stewards in their struggles toward food sovereignty?

Resources:

www.slowfoodusa.org/index.php/programs/raft_detail/become_a_food_detective/



6. Glossary

We've adapted definitions for some of the terms that come up both in the film and discussions, from Wikipedia and sources as noted.

Ethical Eating can include looking at the impact of your food choices on the environment and animals, asking questions about where your food comes from and trying to take responsibility for how your food is produced.

Fair Trade is about getting the money to the people who grow your food. It is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, which seeks greater equity in international trade. Fair trade's intent is to work with marginalized producers and workers to help them move towards self-sufficiency and stability.

Food Security refers to the availability of food and one's access to it. A household or region is considered food secure when its occupants do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Ninety percent of the foods Alaskans consume are shipped in from outside, most items having traveled over 3,000 miles (50% of Alaskans live in Anchorage). In the event of a break in transportation, statistics show that Alaska has four days worth of food stocked on the store shelves. www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article

Local Food Buying, growing and gathering local food is valuable because it supports small producers, uses less fossil fuel and can foster connections to cultural heritage, our environment and community. As the film shows, local is not simple. For example, delivering small amounts of local products to many markets can use more fuel than trucking a full load to a distant supermarket.

Tofu, the white block the filmmaker takes on and off the plate, is a soft white food made by coagulating soymilk and pressing the resulting curds into blocks. It is of Chinese origin, and part of East Asian and Southeast Asian cuisine. Tofu is low in calories, high in iron and is a good source of protein for vegetarians.

Organic Food For the majority of human history, agriculture can be described as organic; only during the 20th century was a large supply of synthetic chemicals introduced to the food supply. Under organic production, the use of conventional pesticides, insecticides and herbicides is greatly restricted. Currently, the European Union, the United States, Canada, Japan and many other countries require producers to obtain special certification in order to market food as "organic." Most certifications allow some chemicals and pesticides to be used, so consumers should be aware of the standards for qualifying as "organic." Historically, organic farms have been relatively small family farms, which is why organic food was once only available in small stores or farmers' markets. Since the early 1990s, organic production has grown around 20% a year, far ahead of the rest of the food industry. As of April 2008, organic food accounts for 1–2% of food sales worldwide.

Subsistence is a way of life and cultural heritage for Alaskan Natives. Federal law defines it as "the customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools or transportation." The current rural subsistence harvest is about 354 pounds of food per person per year. That is more than the U.S. average consumption of 255 pounds of domestic meat, fish, and poultry (the average American uses a total of 1,371 pounds of all foods a year). www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/proa/subsistence.html

Sustainability is the capacity to endure. In ecology, the word describes how biological systems remain diverse and productive over time. For humans it is the potential for long-term maintenance of well being, which in turn depends on the well being of the natural world and the responsible use of resources. Efforts to live more sustainably can take many forms, from reorganizing living conditions in cities, to developing green technologies, reappraising economic sectors using green building and sustainable agriculture, and changing our individual lifestyles.

7. Notes and Resources

¹ From Subsistence Management Information, a site devoted to explaining federal regulatory processes and subsistence fisheries issues:<http://www.subsistmginfo.org/basics.htm> and The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act: Conflict and Controversy, Monica E. Thomas, *Polar Record*, 23(142): 27-36 See also (1986):http://www.alaskool.org/projects/Ancsa/ARTICLES/mthomas/ANCSA_Conflict.htm#Introduction

²*Appendix III: Tlingit Terminology from Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx Sitee, Our Food Is Our Tlingit Way of Life: Excerpts from Oral Interviews* by Richard G. Newton and Madonna L. Moss, U.S. Forest Service, 2006. Note: the value, significance and accuracy of this glossary of Tlingit names for plants, animals and ways of preparing Native food derives from the efforts of numerous people including William Nelson, Sr., Lydia and Jimmie George, and Dick Newton, John Marks, Roby Littlefield and Nora and Richard Dauenhauer.

³From a Nation at Risk: Obesity in the United States, A Statistical Sourcebook" by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, American Stroke Association and American Heart Association. May 2005..

⁴Morland K, Wing S, Diez Roux A. The contextual effect of the local food environment on residents' diets. *American Journal of Public Health* 2002;92:1761-7.

⁵Morland K, Wing S, Diez Roux A, Poole C. Neighborhood characteristic associated with the location of food stores and food service places. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2002;22[1]:23-9.

⁶Institute of Medicine entitled Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance." Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2005

⁷*Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx Sitee, Our Food Is Our Tlingit Way of Life.*

Resources on the web (see also links at www.eatingalaska.com)

- **American Public Health Association policy statement: Toward a Healthy, Sustainable Food System**

<http://www.apha.org/advocacy/policy/policysearch/default.htm?id=1361>

Discusses the human, social, environmental and economic costs of conventional food production, including chemicals and pathogens contaminating our food, air, soil and water; depletion of natural resources; and climate change.

- **Prevention Institute's Report, Cultivating Common Ground: Linking Health and Sustainable Agriculture**

<http://preventioninstitute.org/sa/susag.html#sfs>

In addition to discussing problems with the current food system, this report discusses ways of moving toward a more sustainable food system.

- **Eat Grub**

- **Community Food Audit**

<http://www.eatgrub.org/wordpress/>

Conduct a community food audit identifying healthy, meaningful and sustainable food resources in your community using Eat Grub's Community Food Audit tool.

- **Green Teacher**

greenteacher.com/articles.html

Games, tools and more.

- **Rethinking School Lunch**

<http://www.ecoliteracy.org/programs/rsl-guide.html>

Conduct an analysis of school lunches in your school or district from a nutritional, aesthetic (e.g., tastes, smells, textures and colors of foods, etc.), environmental (e.g., energy, water, pesticides, waste, etc.) and/or social (inclusive menu, inviting lunchroom environment, etc.) perspective. Make recommendations for aligning school lunches more closely with *Eating Alaska's* quest for healthy, meaningful and sustainable foods. This activity might be done by a number of subcommittees. Conduct an analysis of lunches in another setting, such as your workplace, childcare, or after school program.

- **The Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments**

<http://preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact/members/index.php>

The Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments developed the Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) is a concrete menu of strategies designed to help people improve nutrition and activity environments on a local level. These organized into seven environments (childcare, school, after-school, community, workplace, healthcare and government. The initiative's definition of sustainable food systems includes "Socially inclusive of all people in society" and "Encouraging knowledge and understanding of food and food culture."

Alaskan Web Resources

- **Alaska Food Policy Council**

<http://alaskafoodpolicy.blogspot.com/>

Today there are over 100 councils nationwide, bringing together stakeholders to examine how the food system is operating and to develop recommendations on how to improve it.

- **Alaskan Grown**

www.alaskagrown.org

Learn about what is growing in Alaska. Includes useful links and resources.

- **Alaska Community Action on Toxics**

www.akaction.org

Advocates for environmental health and justice. Most people imagine Alaska to be a wild pristine place, but the reality is more complex.

- **Alaska Traditional Knowledge and Native Foods Database**

www.nativeknowledge.org/

Includes information on the nutritive value, positive health effects, possible levels of contaminants and consumption levels of subsistence foods in Alaska.

- **Calypso Farm and Ecology Center**

www.calypsofarm.org

Calypso resources include *The Living Classroom Manual*, a comprehensive, standards-based guide to using Fairbanks area gardens to teach mathematics, science, and English/language arts in kindergarten through sixth grade and useful to classrooms all over Alaska.

- **Cooperative Extension Service (Alaska)**

www.uaf.edu/ces/

Research and Education on gardening in the North, invasive plants and more.

- **Alaska in Action: Statewide Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan**

www.hss.state.ak.us/DPH/chronic/obesity/pubs/AlaskaInAction.pdf

From the State of Alaska, Department of Social Services. Division of Public Health.

National and International Coalitions and Associations

- **City Farmer**

<http://cityfarmer.org/>

Urban Agriculture Notes on everything from composting to turning lawns to gardens from Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture.

- **Civil Eats**

<http://civileats.com/>

Promotes critical thought about sustainable agriculture and food systems as part of building economically and socially just communities.

- **The Community Food Security Coalition**

www.foodsecurity.org/

Dedicated to building strong, sustainable, local and regional food systems that ensure access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all people at all times.

- **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Locator**

www.localharvest.org/

Find wholesome, sustainable food from community supported agriculture, farms, stores and restaurants in the US and Canada, in your neighborhood and when you travel.

- **Environmental Working Group**

<http://www.ewg.org/>

Reports on pesticides and toxic contaminants in food.

- **FoodRoutes**

www.foodroutes.org/

Dedicated to reintroducing Americans to their food, the seeds it grows from, the farmers who produce it, and the routes that carry it from the fields to their tables.

- **Growing Power**

www.growingpower.org

Will Allen, the Chief Executive Officer believes, "If people can grow safe, healthy, affordable food, if they have access to land and clean water, this is transformative on every level in a community." Growing Power provides education, demonstrates easy to replicate growing methods and distributes produce, grass-based meats, and value-added products

- **Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)**

<http://www.iatp.org/>

Works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems.

- **Mid Atlantic Gleaning Network**

midatlanticgleaningnetwork.org

Links farmers who have crops that are edible but not marketable with those who distribute food to the needy through the work of volunteer gleaners.

- **Organic Consumers Association**

www.organicconsumers.org

Campaigning for health, justice, and sustainability

- **Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT)**

www.slowfoodusa.org/index.php/programs/details/raft/

Dedicated to rescuing America's diverse foods and food traditions.

- **Slow Food**

www.slowfoodusa.org

Slow Food is an international organization of "eco-gastronomes" whose mission is "to protect the pleasures of the table from the homogenization of modern fast food and life.

- **Sustainable Table**

www.sustainabletable.org/home.php

Sustainable Table celebrates local sustainable food, educates consumers on food-related issues and works to build community through food. Its menu of issues

(www.sustainabletable.org/issues/) includes those related to the human, social, environmental and economic costs of food production, processing, distribution, etc.

- **Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS)**

www.ucsusa.org/

UCS is an independent non-profit alliance of citizens and scientists across the country. UCS augments rigorous scientific analysis with innovative thinking and committed citizen advocacy to build a cleaner, healthier environment and a safer world.

- **Vegetarian Resource Group**

www.vrg.org

Dedicated to educating the public about vegetarianism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, ethics, and world hunger.

Books Especially for Kids



50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth; Javna, John. The Earthworks Group, 1990, ISBN 13: 978-0-8362-2301-9

The Curious Garden; Brown, Peter. Little, Brown Young Readers, 2009. ISBN: 9780316015479

One boy's quest for a greener world, one garden at a time.

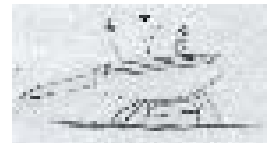
Chew On This: Everything You Don't Want to Know About Fast Food; Schlosser, Eric. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006. ISBN13: 9780141318448. Schlosser allows readers aged twelve and above to make up their own minds about the incredible fast food phenomenon.

The Omnivore's Dilemma for Kids: The Secrets Behind What You Eat; Pollan, Michael. Penguin Press, 2009. ISBN: 080373500. This young readers' adaptation, for ages 12 and up, of Pollan's food-chain exploration, encourages kids to consider the personal and global health implications of their food choices.

Open Mouth: Food Poems; James Crowden et al. Prospect Books, 2006 ISBN: 1903018498.

Books and Articles

Alaska's Farms and Gardens; Alaska Geographic, Vol. 11, No. 2. ISBN 882402021. This issue offers an overview of the past, present, and future of agriculture in Alaska, plus information on growing your own fruits and vegetables.



Alaska's Wild Plants: A Guide to Alaska's Edible Harvest; Schofield, Janice. Alaska Northwest Books 2004. ISBN-10: 0882404334. An authoritative introduction to more than 70 of Alaska's most common wild edible plants, with identification information and recipes.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle; Kingsolver, Barbara. Harper Collins, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-06-085255-9. Novelist Kingsolver, along with her husband and two daughters, adds to the growing genre of writing about local food in an entertaining, earnest, and funny portrait of a year spent eating homegrown food.

Asparagus to Zucchini, A Guide to Farm-Fresh; Madison Area CSA Coalition and Doug Wubben, 3rd edition. 2004. ISBN 9780972121781. The A-Z Food Book includes essays that address the "larger picture" of sustainable agriculture by describing how food choices fit into our economy, environment, and communities as well as information on home food preservation and helping kids appreciate vegetables..

The Art of Simple Food; Waters, Alice. Clarkson Potter Publishers, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-307-33679-8. Waters gives us nine tenets of eating well by eating locally and sustainably along with dozens of delicious recipes from her Chez Panisse repertoire.

Blessed Unrest; Hawken, Paul. Viking, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-670-03852-7. Hawken traces the formation of the environmental and social justice movements from the beginnings of natural science across years and continents in an optimistic call to action.

Bloodties: Nature, Culture, and the Hunt; Kerasote, Ted. Kodansha America, 1994. ISBN13: 9781568360270. Is hunting okay or should we, as one reviewer writes, "stick to photography?" Kerasote writes about hunting and doing less harm to the environment than supermarket shopping for vegetables.

Coming Home to Eat: The Pleasures and Politics of Local Foods; Nabhan, Gary Paul. W.W. Norton & Company, 2002. ISBN: 0-393-02017-7. Nabhan, a subsistence hunter, ethnobiologist, and activist devoted to recovering lost food traditions, gave himself a task (one of the first to do this) to spend a year trying to eat foods grown, fished, or gathered within 250 miles of his Arizona home

Common Edible Seaweeds in the Gulf of Alaska; Garza, Dolly. Alaska Sea Grant College Program, 2005. ISBN:9781566120869

Deep Economy, The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future; McKibben, Bill. Holt Rinehart And Winston, 2008. ISBN13: 9780805087222 McKibben eloquently challenges our growth-based economy and argues for new ideas and a more community based approach.

In Defense of Food; Pollan, Michael. Penguin Press, 2008. ISBN 978-1-59420-145-5. This book gives the reader the action plan to practice what was learned in the *Omnivore's Dilemma*.

Diet for a Small Planet; Lappe, Frances Moore. Ballentine Books, 1971. The book that began a lot of this conversation.

Tlingit Recipes of Today and Long Ago; Duncan, Pauline. Lenexa; Cookbook Publishers, Inc. 2006.

The End of Food; Roberts, Paul. Houghton Mifflin, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-618-60623-8. A well-researched look at the growing crisis in our food system and a call for a new way of thinking about food with a global vision.

Farming In the Dark; Janke, Rhonda. University Readers, 2008. ISBN 978-193426918-3.

The Farm to Table Cookbook: The Art of Eating Locally; Manning, Ivy. Sasquatch Books, 2008. ISBN 978-1570-615290. A compilation of seasonal recipes with emphasis on ingredients from CSA's and

farmer's markets

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal; Eric Schlosser. Harper Perennial, 2002

Food Matters: A guide to Conscious Eating; Bittman, Mark. Simon & Schuster, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4165-7564-1. The author of *How to Cook Everything* and *How to Cook Everything Vegetarian*, provides the short course on Big Agriculture and Big Food and concludes with a plan that expands Pollan's advice in the previous book.

Food Not Lawns: How to Turn Your Yard into a Garden and Your Neighborhood into a Community; Flores, H.C. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2006. ISBN: 978-1-933392-07-3.

Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health; Nestle, Marion. University of California Press, 2002. ISBN: 0-520-22465.

Grub: Ideas for an Urban Organic Kitchen; ; Lappe', Anna and Bryant Terry. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2006. ISBN: 1-58542-459-5. Combining a to-the-point expose about the fake food filling our supermarkets and the compelling reasons for choosing organic, local, and "fair" foods, Grub helps us become a part of the revolution in food and farming that is best for our bodies and the earth.

Heart and Blood: Living with Deer in America; Nelson, Richard. Vintage, 1998. ISBN: 9780679736868. In this book, cultural anthropologist Nelson, advisor of *Eating Alaska*, explores the relationship between human and deer, including views of both hunters and anti-hunters.

Holy Cows & Hog Heaven: The Food Buyers Guide to Farm Friendly Food; Salatin, Joel. Polyface, Inc., 2004. ISBN: 0-9638109-4-4.

Hope's Edge: the Next Diet for a Small Planet; Lappe', Frances Moore and Anna Lappe'. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2006. ISBN: 1-58542-149-9. The Lappe' mother and daughter team explores the perceptions holding us back from realizing that the way to overcome the myth of the "scarcity of food" is to solve the actual scarcity of democracy worldwide.

Last Child in the Woods Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder; Louv, Richard. Algonquin Books Of Chapel Hill, 2008. ISBN: 9781565126053. This book created a national conversation about the disconnection between children and nature. The new edition includes 101 things you can do to create change in your community, school, and family and discussion points to inspire people of all ages to talk about the importance of nature in their lives.

The Omnivore's Dilemma; Pollan, Michael. Penguin Press, 2006. ISBN:1-59420-082-3. Michael Pollan traces the natural history of four meals from field to table and thereby takes us through the current practices in industrial and natural farming. To Pollan the omnivore's dilemma is twofold: what we choose to eat ("What should we have for dinner?") and how we let that food be produced.

Ordinary Wolves; Kantner, Seth. Milkweed Editions, 2004. ISBN: 9781571310477. A novel about a white boy raised among natives in the Alaskan Arctic that portrays the devastation modern America brings to a natural lifestyle.

Plenty: One Man, One Woman and a Raucous Year of Eating Locally; Smith, Alisa and J.B. Mackinnon. Harmony Books, 2007. ISBN 978-0-307-34732-9. Smith and Mackinnon's year of experimental eating Their urban experience of local eating provides for an interesting read.

Producing and Obtaining Food; The Living Green Series, World Book Inc. 2008. ISBN 9780716614098. An exploration of the environmental, health, and social issues of modern agriculture.

Features include fact boxes, activities, glossary, list of recommended reading and Web sites, and index.

Real Food: What to Eat and Why; Planck, Nina. Bloomsbury, 2006. ISBN: 978-1-59691-144-4.

Renewing America's Food Traditions; Saving and Savoring the Continent's Most Endangered Foods, Nabhan, Gary Paul, Editor. Chelsea Green, Publishing, 2008. ISBN: 978-1-933392-89-9.

Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture; Henderson, Elizabeth. Chelsea Green Publishing, 1999. ISBN: 1-890132-23-2.

Shopping for Porcupine: A Life in Arctic; Kantner, Seth Milkweed Editions, 2008. ISBN: 9781571313010. A collection of portraits and recollections of life on northwestern Alaska's Kobuk River, from the late 1950's through to the present day.

Slow Food: the Case for Taste; Petrini, Carlo. Columbia University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0-231-12844-4. A history and philosophy of the Slow Food Movement written by the movement's founder.

Small Is Possible: Life in a Local Economy; Estill, Lyle. New Society Publishers, 2008. ISBN9789-0-86571-603-2.

Smart by Nature: Schooling for Sustainability; Stone, Michael. Watershed Media/University of California Press, 2009.. ISBN: 9780970950048. Offers firsthand accounts and strategies for greening campuses, rethinking school food, and transforming schools into model sustainable communities.

Traditional Food Guide for Alaska Native Cancer Survivors; Written by the Alaska Native People and Christine A DeCourtney, Desiree M. Simeon, Karen M. Mitchell, et al. Anchorage, Alaska. Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, 2008. After introductory remarks on nutrition for Native cancer survivors, lists traditional food sources such as moose, bird eggs, salmon, berries and seaweed, with information on preparation and nutrition. Order through Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Cancer Program at www.anthc.org/chs/crs/foodguide.cfm.

Twinkie, Deconstructed; Ettlinger, Steve. Hudson Street Press, 2007. ISBN 978—1-59463-018-7. From most to least, Ettlinger traces the creation of each ingredient listed on the Twinkie wrapper, dispelling the myth that they last forever.

The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter; Singer, Peter and Jim Mason. Rodale Books, 2006. ISBN: 9781579548896. This work, by a Princeton ethicist and an animal rights activist and writer, typifies why Americans should take a deep look at the food they eat.

What to Eat: An Aisle-by-Aisle guide to Savvy Food Choices and Good Eating; Nestle, Marion. North Point Press, 2006. ISBN: 978-0-86547-704-9. Nestle provides an expose of the industrial food complex and solutions for good shopping and eating--see also her website at: www.foodpolitics.com.

Veganomicon: The Ultimate Vegan Cookbook; Moskowitz, Isa Chandra & Terry Hope Romero. Marlowe & Company, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-56924-264-3. After a short section on why, this volume contains some of the best advice on how to eat vegan-style and smile.

Where Our Food Comes From; Nabhan, Gary Paul. Island Press/Shearwater Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-59726-399-3.

Yup'ik Native Nutrition; Mary M. Gregory, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, 199

Other Relevant Documentaries

These are just a few additional documentaries about food, the environment and sustainability that are great for discussion. We've listed the distributors and/or film websites below.

- **Alaska Native Diet: Introduction to dietary benefits and risks in Alaskan villages**
- **Alaska Native Diet: The importance of traditional foods**

Informative, with important interviews. Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association. www.apiai.com

- **Food, Inc.** A look into the underbelly of America's food industry. www.foodincmovie.com

- **King Corn.** By growing an acre of corn in Iowa two friends uncover the devastating impact that corn is having on the environment, public health and family farms. www.bullfrogfilms.com

- **Nourish: Food + Community** explores a vital question: How can we create a more sustainable food system? www.goworldlink.org

- • **No Impact Man** follow a Manhattan-based family as they abandon their high consumption 5th Avenue lifestyle and try to live a year while making no net environmental impact. www.noimpactdoc.com

- **Real Dirt on Farmer John.** "The epic tale of a maverick Midwestern farmer." www.angelicorganics.com

- **Ripe for Change:** Set in California, the film examines a host of thorny questions: What are the trade-offs between the ability to produce large quantities of food versus the health of workers, consumers, and the planet? What are the hidden costs of "inexpensive" food? www.berkeleymedia.com

- **The Shrimp** a meditative documentary that follows the life, death and rebirth of environmentally threatened seafood from source to plate and back again. www.newday.com

- **Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai:** How the simple act of women planting trees changed the nation of Kenya. www.newday.com

8. Credits

This guide was made possible through a grant from Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska, through the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. The Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska program is part of a national Steps to a Healthier U.S. program run by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

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For more information on the film or guide contact info@eatingalaska.com or visit www.eatingalaska.com. Frankenstein Productions and archange, Inc. are entirely responsible for the content © 2009, Updated 2011.

