



FARMER'S LETTER

One Grain of Rice Contains The Universe

By Byeong soo Kim
Paldang Farmer

The heaven's blessings, the richness of the earth, the farmer's hard work and sweat produces each grain of rice and that grain of rice gives our bodies the energy to sustain life. This is the reason why it is taught in the East not to treat or dispose of rice carelessly.

Today in the age of materialism, however, food is looked at from only two points of view. One is the economical point of view – how much economic value the raw materials or food has and if production is increased, whether a fair price is paid to the farmers or not. The other is the nutritional point of view – attention is focused on the development of fulfilling people with sufficient nutrients and energy through good food. Slow Food has added “taste” and a slight “extravagance” to this. If expanded more, it would be in the interest of environmentally friendly and sustainable agriculture.

From this point of view, humanity is facing severe problems regarding food and the ability to solve these problems is limited. The solutions can be found by looking at the rudimentary causes of these complex issues.

For thousands of years, the East has put emphasis on food and that it, too, has spirituality. Families taught that a grain of rice contained the universe so it should not be carelessly disposed of or monopolized and that food should be eaten just enough to sustain life as opposed to gluttony. Every household would store several spoons of rice in a pot (Jomdori) before preparing meals and when it was filled it would be shared with neighbors or those less fortunate. Also for ceremonies of ancestral rites, it was a custom to leave some of the dinner food outside of the main gate for cats, bird and other animals. During festivities like birthdays and weddings, travelers and even beggars from neighboring towns would be invited over for meals. Ordinarily, meals were not finished but left for servants and was considered etiquette. Old farmers planted three beans in every hole. One bean for the birds in the sky, another bean for the insects underground and the last bean is the farmer's share.

I believe it is extremely important and necessary that we take a look back at the teachings of Eastern spirituality and philosophy and include it into the development of the Slow Food movement.

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SPECIAL PROMOTION



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Gachi members get a 10% discount off a 90 minute Naturopathic Initial Intake visit (a savings of 15,000won) in the initial visit, It's a combination of intake, physical exam, bodywork and counselling.

Whole Foods and Naturopathic Medicine

By Sunjae Lee
Naturopathic Doctor

Dr. Sunjae Lee is the resident Naturopathic Doctor at Create Wellness Center in Itaewon, Seoul. Trained at the National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, OR, he received a Doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine and a Masters in Oriental Medicine and treats from a holistic perspective which combines both the Eastern and Western approaches. Keep an eye out for his regular articles in upcoming issues of this newsletter!

One of the core principles of “Naturopathic Medicine”, which is a collection of natural medicines from the older European and American traditions, is to “treat the root” of the condition rather than chasing after symptoms. One of ways that we pursue this principle is through the diet; so many illnesses can be caused by improper diet, often without our knowing.

However, finding the right diet for your goals can be daunting and frustrating. Every year a new diet comes out and health experts suddenly jump on a new bandwagon. In general, the safest and most accurate way to find a diet right for you is to have the guidance of a health professional. That being said, there are several common sense tips that everyone can benefit from, such as avoiding refined and processed foods, having adequate water intake, consumption of healthy fats and avoiding unhealthy ones such as trans-fats.

Of all these common sense tips, perhaps the most important one would be to choose whole, unprocessed foods over refined foods. Here are just several reasons why:

Carbohydrates and sugar

The body needs carbohydrates and sugar for energy, but not all sugar is equal. When we eat carbohydrates in whole foods such as a sweet potato, it begins a long process where long chains of carbohydrates are broken down into smaller pieces, starting in the mouth and ending in our gut. The sugars are gradually absorbed by the intestinal lining and sent to the liver, and eventually out to our

bloodstream to be used by our body’s cells for energy. However, when we consume the sugars in processed foods such as sodas or an energy bar, the sugar molecules are already broken down, so they are absorbed quickly by our gut and the blood sugar levels quickly spike.

Having high blood sugar levels most notably has the potential to cause diabetes, which ultimately increases risk of heart disease and potential for damage to the eyes and kidneys. The carbohydrates found in whole foods are “complex”, which means they take a long time to be broken down, which means they won’t cause spikes in blood sugar, which means they have the lowest potential for causing diabetes and heart disease. On the other hand, the “complex” carbohydrates will be broken down slower, so they will provide a steady fuel source throughout the course of the day with less potential of dips and peaks in energy levels.

Protein and fats

Eating whole foods such as nuts, salmon, flax seeds, olive oils, provide a healthy source of fats called “essential fatty acids”— called essential because they are one of the things that the body needs to function, yet is not produced internally by the body. While processed foods are virtually devoid of these healthy fats, the most reliable way to obtain essentially fatty acids, besides direct intake of fish oils, is by consumption of whole foods such as nuts, seeds, salmon, etc. The benefits to these “essential fatty acids” is truly manifold, ranging from overall lowering of inflammation, decreasing cardiovascular risk, increasing brain function, among many other benefits.

On the other hand, a common ingredient in processed and fried foods is “trans-fatty acids”. These are fats that are not found in nature- they can only be created by industrial processes such as hydrogenation (as in margarine), or by distortion of

fat molecules via heat (as in fried foods). As such, our bodies doesn't recognize or properly deal with these molecules, and the net effect is an increase in the type of "bad" cholesterol which deposits in arteries and increases risk for heart disease.

Fiber

Another benefit of whole foods that is virtually absent from processed food is fiber, which is basically made up of structural material of plants that can either dissolve in water or stay undissolved. Both forms have manifold benefits to digestion, including stimulating intestinal movement, binding and lowering cholesterol, contributing to a feeling of

fullness and therefore helping with stabilizing blood sugar levels. One cannot overstate the importance of fiber, and the best source is unquestionably through whole foods such as green leafy vegetables.

Conclusion

I could go on and on about many other reasons to avoid processed foods as much as possible such as the food additives, hormonal disruptors, potential allergens found in refined foods but these will have to be covered in a future article. As a Naturopathic Doctor, I fully support the mission and service of the Gachi CSA and am honored to be working in collaboration with your community. In health,

Create Wellness Center has been serving the English speaking Korean community for 15 years in Itaewon, Seoul with a bilingual staff of Chiropractic, Naturopathic, Osteopathic doctors, therapeutic massage, pilates, and rehabilitation specialists. **Gachi members get a 10% discount off** a 90 minute Naturopathic Initial Intake visit (a savings of 15000). Call (02) 749-4849 to make an appointment!

www.createwellnesscenter.com

Thank you, Gachi CSA Community!



Stream, Mr. Woo (Baker) and Anna

Red Stamp

How was your 2014? What have you eaten this year? I hope you had healthier and happier life being with us this year. It has not been easy to run Gachi CSA but we are growing with you. Thank you for supporting us. Without you, there would be no Gachi CSA. You made our year! Thanks a lot.

From Stream

Time goes so fast. 2014 is almost done and hope you had great year. I really appreciate that you always support us and understand even though we are not perfect. Gachi CSA is a small community now but I believe we can make it better if you are with us. ☺ Have a happy holiday and thank you again!

From Anna



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