Your notes

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition: revision notes

Environmental impact and sustainability

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Food and the environment

- **Food miles** are the distance food travels from where it is produced to where it is eaten. Air-freighted food has a large **carbon footprint**.
- Buying local and **seasonal food** reduces **food miles**, supports local farmers and is often fresher.
- **Intensive farming** produces large amounts of cheap food but can harm animal welfare and the environment (such as fertiliser run-off). Organic and free-range farming reduce some harms but often cost more.
- Meat, especially beef, has a much bigger **carbon footprint** and uses more land and water than plant foods.

Food waste and packaging

- A lot of food is wasted in UK homes. Reduce waste by planning meals, using leftovers, storing food correctly and understanding date marks.
- Packaging protects food and extends shelf life, but creates waste. Choose recyclable or reusable packaging and avoid excess.

Food security and sustainability

- **Food security** means everyone having access to enough safe, nutritious food.
- Threats include climate change, population growth, and wars. **Sustainable** fishing (such as fish with the MSC label) protects fish stocks.
- Genetically modified (GM) crops can resist pests or drought and increase yields, but some people worry about their effects on health and the environment.
- Guernsey imports most of its food, so island **food security** depends on shipping, although local produce such as fish, dairy and vegetables helps.

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Key terms

Food miles	The distance food travels from producer to consumer.
Carbon footprint	The greenhouse gases produced by a food over its life.
Seasonal food	Food eaten at the time of year it naturally grows.
Food security	Everyone having access to enough safe, nutritious food.
Intensive farming	Farming that produces large amounts of food from a small area.
GM food	Food from plants or animals whose genes have been changed.
Sustainable	Able to continue without harming the environment for the future.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What are food miles?
2. How can buying seasonal food help the environment?
3. Which food generally has the biggest carbon footprint?
4. What is food security?
5. What does the MSC label show?
6. Which is a way to reduce food waste at home?
7. What is a disadvantage of intensive farming?
8. What is a benefit of GM crops?

Answers

1. The distance food travels from producer to consumer
2. It reduces food miles and energy for growing
3. Beef
4. Everyone having access to enough safe, nutritious food
5. The fish comes from a sustainable fishery
6. Planning meals and using leftovers
7. It can harm animal welfare and the environment
8. They can resist pests or drought

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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