

How does a nutritious diet support health?

LEARNING RESOURCE

Key Concepts

Health is the uninhibited growth, development, and maintenance of our bodies and minds.

- *Health is linked to agriculture* because agriculture is responsible for stewarding the land and resources that produce food and determining how much, which, and when food is available in our communities.

Nutrition refers to the intake of calories (or energy) and nutrients that the body needs to grow, develop, heal, and maintain a healthy weight and good health.

- Food is made up of nutrients, including *macronutrients* (fats, carbohydrates, and proteins) that provide energy and help us grow, and *micronutrients* like essential vitamins and minerals.

A **healthy diet** is any combination of food that provides the right amount and balance of necessary nutrients to meet the current needs of an individual's body given their lifestyle, age, and physical condition.

- This includes sufficient *quantity, diversity, and good quality* food.
 - Sufficient quantity means not too little and not too much.
 - Diversity means foods from various food groups, such as starches, legumes and pulses, fruits and vegetables, oils, nuts and seeds, and animal-source foods.
 - Quality means food that is stored and prepared safely so it will not make you sick, and so that it is appealing to eat.
- Healthy diets will vary based on culture, personal preference, and economic resources, but they all contain safe, diverse, balanced, and nutritious foods.

- Two of the most important life stages that have unique nutrition needs are young children, and women who are pregnant or lactating.

Practice and check your understanding

Say it out loud (to a colleague, a friend, or to yourself!) or capture your thoughts in writing.

Describe what is needed to maintain a healthy diet.

How is nutrition related to agriculture?