Pyramid Schemes

Who's health does the USDA food pyramid ensure? The food industry's healthy profits. They lobbied to pervert the original pyramid submitted by the USDA nutritionists who were charged with creating it. The first revised pyramid:

- Altered wording to emphasize processed foods over fresh and whole foods
- Downplayed lean meats and low-fat dairy choices to calm the Meat and Dairy Industries.
- Increased the servings of bread, cereal and pasta from 3-4 to 6-11 servings to appease the wheat growers.
- Lowered the 5-9 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables to 2-3 servings
- Moved white-flour foods out of the "eat sparingly" category.
- Changed wording about eating junk food from "eat less" to the less meaningful "avoid too much."

The pyramid was again revised in 2005. Its complicated design and wishy-washy guidelines do little more to ensure good nutrition though continues to pander to the profits of the food industry,

Here is the original food pyramid developed by Dr. Luise Light, one of the nutritionists charged with designing the original pyramid in the '80s. When she saw the changes made because of industry pressure she predicted that America would see an epidemic of obesity and diabetes and resigned from her position.

Sad to say, her prediction has come true.

Suggested reading:
What To Eat **by Luise Light**

Veganomics

Many of us fighting food politics have become vegan or vegetarian, believing this choice not only serves our health but also makes a collective impact on the food industry and the politics that serve it. It didn't take long for the marketing geniuses to turn this movement into a new niche market.

In her book *The Vegetarian Myth*, Lierre Keith explains how using grass fed animals as a food source not only has less ecological impact but also feeds the soil, better nourishes the human body, and is the natural model of the life-and-death cycle respected by many indigenous peoples. On the other hand, agriculture, with its acres upon acres of monocrops—wheat, corn, and soy—strips the natural environment not only of diverse animal and plant populations but also of its healthy, living soil.

Keith provides studies linking the eating of soy products to endometriosis, early puberty, hyperthyroidism, memory loss, head-aches, reproductive complaints, seizures, and other health issues.

THE POLITICS OF food

If you are like most Americans, you eat what you are told. Food industry advertisements tell you their hyper-processed, chemical-laden, enriched, colored, attractively packaged, products are what will make you thin and healthy, calm your stomach, give you energy, bring you love, save your precious time and ultimately serve you happiness.
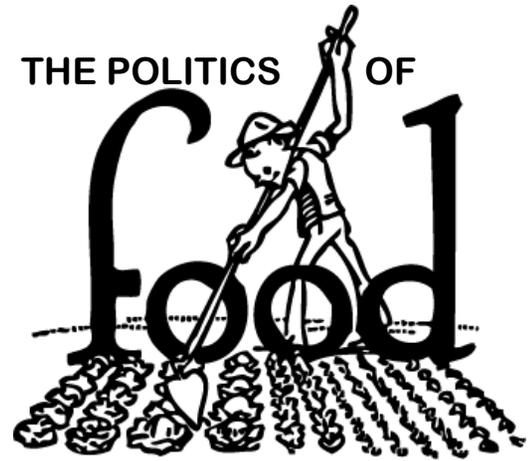
The foods these psychologically astute marketing geniuses want you to eat (and pay dearly for) are hardly food at all. Read the labels. How many of the ingredients are really food? Through processing, nutrients are eroded, lost or transformed into substances that your body doesn't quite know how to handle. The result: acid reflux, irritable bowel syndrome, syndrome x, diabetes, mood swings, lethargy, insomnia… the list goes on.

How have foods come to this sorry state? The short answer is politics. In the US, government agencies like the USDA and the FDA, are not out there to keep America healthy. They are simply puppets of food industry moguls looking to make a buck. At the local level, government kowtows to superstore grocery markets located on large suburban parcels. Inner-city neighborhood markets cannot compete, condemning those living in the core city to diets of convenience store junk food.

Internationally, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is finishing up the details on its Codex Alimentarius, which will overrule any countries' or county's regulations on how foods are grown, processed and traded. Many believe this code could enforce the use of pesticides, irradiation and GM seed use while prohibiting the growth and use of medicinal herbs. Meanwhile, small, local farms stand in danger of being legislated out of business by proposed regulations aimed at decreasing the increasing dangers of factory farm foods.

Even if you aren't ready to make a stand against the WTO, USDA, Cargill or Monsanto, or your elected officials, you can take a stand for your self by choosing to eat real food. When you're feeling healthier, maybe you'll have the energy to join a grass roots group working to make real food available for all.