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## In Defense of Food

Michael Pollan

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### Omega-3s

“We’re eating a lot more seeds and a lot fewer leaves (as do the animals we depend on).” “Leaves provide a host of critical nutrients a body can’t get from a diet of refined seeds. There are antioxidants and phytochemicals; there is the fiber; and then there are the essential omega-3 fatty acids found in leaves, which some researchers believe will turn out to be the most crucial missing nutrient of all.” pp.124-125

**“Too much omega-6 may be just as much a problem as too little omega-3”** p. 126

“For years plant breeders have been unwittingly selecting for plants that produce fewer omega-3s, because such crops don’t spoil as quickly.” p. 127

“When food makers partially hydrogenate oils to render them more stable, it is the omega-3s that are eliminated.” p. 127

**“Researchers are convinced that these historically low levels of omega-3 (or, conversely, historically high levels of omega-6) bear responsibility for many of the chronic diseases associated with the Western diet.”** pp. 127-128

“Could it be that the problem with the Western diet is a gross deficiency in this [omega-3s] essential nutrient? A growing number of researchers have concluded that it is.” p. 130

“The billions we spend on anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and acetaminophen is money spent **to undo the effects of too much omega-6 in the diet.**” p. 131

“Of all of the changes to our food system that go under the heading “The Western Diet,” the shift from a food chain with green plants as its base to one based on seeds may be the most far reaching of all. Nutritional scientists focus on different nutrients—whether the problem with the modern diet is too many refined carbohydrates, not enough good fats, too many bad fats, or a deficiency of any number of micronutrients or too many total calories. But at the root of all these biochemical changes is a single ecological change. For the shift from leaves to seeds affects much more than the levels of omega-3 and omega-6 in the body. It also helps account for the flood of refined carbohydrates in the modern diet and the drought of so many micronutrients and the surfeit of total calories. From leaves to seeds: It’s almost, if not quite, a Theory of Everything.” p. 132

“The rule about eating more leaves and fewer seeds applies not only to us but also to the animals in our food chain.” p. 168

***Our comments: Omega 6 is very pro-inflammatory and Omega 3 is very anti-inflammatory.***