

11 DIETARY  
**4**  
PRINCIPLES

**Eat some animal foods raw;  
cook most plant foods.**



All traditional cultures cooked some or most of their food, especially plant foods like grains and vegetables, but all consumed a portion of their animal foods raw.

## Fourth Principle

Should we cook our food? “Animals don’t cook their food and neither should we,” say those promoting a raw food diet. True, animals don’t cook, but neither do they wear clothes and shoes, live in houses, write, create works of art, and fill their lives with ritual and process. We are not animals but human beings, and all human societies cook some or even most of their food. Even the Inuit peoples of the frozen north cook a portion of their diet, as well as inhabitants of the tropics who do not need to build fires for warmth.

Many plant foods are indigestible or even poisonous to humans unless they are cooked, especially grains, legumes, many tubers and dark green leaves—consuming a lot of raw vegetable juice is not a formula for good health. Cooking neutralizes many of the toxins that occur in plant foods. Cooking also liberates minerals and other nutrients so that we get more energy and nutrition from plant foods. This means we can spend less time eating and chewing than animals do. Gentle cooking also unfolds the tightly wound proteins in meat, making them more available to enzymatic breakdown; eating only raw meat can actually lead to protein deficiency!

At the same time, every culture consumes some of its animal protein raw—raw meat, raw fish and shellfish, and raw dairy products. Cooking destroys vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, which is more plentiful and more available in animal foods. The application of heat to milk, as in the pasteurization process, is particularly harmful; raw milk contains enzymes to ensure the complete assimilation of every single nutrient in the milk. The heat of pasteurization destroys all these enzymes, turning a food that is easy to digest and assimilate into a food that is very difficult to digest and likely allergenic.

Many cultures relished strange raw foods like muktuk (raw blubber) and organ meats straight from the kill, but there are less challenging ways of getting raw animal protein: steak tartare, carpaccio, oysters, sushi, raw milk and raw cheese. At the same time, you do not need to subject yourself to raw kale, kale chips or raw vegetable juices; rough vegetables only yield their goodness when well cooked—usually cooked with fat or served with butter. And raw or semi-raw grains as in muesli and granola can lead to serious damage in the intestinal tract.

### For further information:

#### Articles

- Why We Cook: by Sally Fallon Morell: [westonaprice.org/health-topics/why-we-cook-and-chop-ferment-salt-and-dry/](http://westonaprice.org/health-topics/why-we-cook-and-chop-ferment-salt-and-dry/)
- Oysters: [westonaprice.org/health-topics/food-features/oysters/](http://westonaprice.org/health-topics/food-features/oysters/)
- A Campaign for Real Milk (WAPF's website on raw milk): [realmilk.com](http://realmilk.com)

#### Brochures

- A Campaign for Real Milk (English, German and Spanish) [westonaprice.org/wp-content/uploads/RealMilkBrochure.pdf](http://westonaprice.org/wp-content/uploads/RealMilkBrochure.pdf)

#### Wise Traditions Podcast [westonaprice.org/podcast/](http://westonaprice.org/podcast/)

- Episode 38: Principle 4: All Traditional Cultures Cooked Some of Their Food, and Ate Some of Their Animal Products Raw with Sally Fallon Morell
- Podcasts on Raw Milk: <https://www.westonaprice.org/podcast-category/raw-milk/>
- Episode 218: Say Cheese! with Sally Fallon Morell
- Episode 245: Raw vs. Cooked with Sally Fallon Morell

#### Recipes

- Steak Tartare by Susanna Zahratka: [westonaprice.org/steak-tartare/](http://westonaprice.org/steak-tartare/)
- Never Buy Mayonnaise Again: [westonaprice.org/never-buy-mayonnaise-again/](http://westonaprice.org/never-buy-mayonnaise-again/)