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## PREFACE

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The *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture* is all about food: a single authoritative source about the most essential element of daily life. Here you will find articles by food historians, anthropologists, chefs and bakers, nutritionists and dieticians, farmers, agronomists and horticulturists, food stylists, and specialists in the culinary arts. In developing the *Encyclopedia*, the editors took special care to make the content interesting and the organization useful for those who want to learn about a particular topic, to make the text enjoyable for those who simply want to explore the wide and wonderful world of food, and to provide sufficient authority and depth for researchers. If this *Encyclopedia* does not tell you everything you need to know about food, it will show you where to find it.

The articles are arranged in alphabetical order, but the overall work was conceived thematically to ensure treatment of all essential aspects of food (see the Systematic Outline at the back of Volume 3). For example, the *Encyclopedia* covers staple foods, such as fruit, fish, meat, and vegetables; cooked and processed foods; food production, storage, distribution, preparation, and processing; and nutrition and constituents of food, such as fats, minerals, starch, and sugar. You will also find articles on festivals and feasts and on major countries and regions of the world, on world religions and their food customs, and on people who have been influential in food history. If a topic does not appear in the table of contents, look in the index; there will likely be several mentions of the subject in different articles. In the *Encyclopedia* you will find the topics you would normally expect in a book about food—such as bread and cheese, cooking, and vitamins—but you will also find some surprises, as in the articles on “Cannibalism,” “Pet Pigs of New Guinea,” “Seabirds and Their Eggs,” “Disgust,” and “Poisoning,” as well as “Spam” and “How to Read an Old (Handwritten) Recipe.” The *Encyclopedia* covers human history from Stone Age nutrition to the future of food, and it reaches all around the world—geographically and culturally—from Australian Aborigines and the Inuit peoples to Pacific Ocean societies and the Inca empire; from the Japanese tea ceremony to food as a weapon of war. Each article concludes with a bibliography and cross-references pointing readers to topics of related interest. The articles are generously illustrated with many rarely seen photographs, line drawings, and old advertisements, and are supplemented by maps, tables, and informative sidebars. Each volume contains a beautiful eight-page color insert of images selected by Associate Editor William Woys Weaver.

Entries explore what constitutes food, how it is procured, where it originates, and what is in the foods we eat. You will find detailed accounts of the