

The great pizza debate: nutrition or junk?

by Larry Munn

OTTAWA (CUP) — It's Saturday night. You and a few friends have just ended the evening by wolfing down a large combination pizza. This feast, a North American ritual, satisfies that enormous appetite you stimulated at the local pub. The question is — was the decision to order a pizza wise or even reasonable?

Nutritionally, pizza is at the centre of some debate. While many nutritionists have referred to it as junk food, other authorities, such as the Canada Food Guide, claim pizza is a well-balanced food including all four food groups. So which is it, a poor or a good choice?

It's true pizza is comprised of the four food groups, but what exactly is the nutritional quality of these foods? Let's examine the ingredients of a pizza, starting with the crust.

The dough in a pizza crust is made of white flour, which is milled from whole grains so it may be stored for long periods without becoming rancid. The whole grain consists of three parts: the bran, the outside part that contains the fiber; the endosperm, which contains the starch; and the germ, high in nutrients such as vitamins and minerals.

When the grain is milled into white flour, all that is left is the endosperm, or the starchy part. As

for enriched flour, a few vitamins are added to what originally had over 20 nutrients. So the pizza crust has few, if any, nutrients, and plenty of starch — which translates into empty calories.

Starch, a fiberless form of carbohydrates, does not move through the intestines well when being digested. The digestive tract becomes sluggish, which may cause bloating as a result of clogged intestines. Your metabolism becomes less efficient, and you start to gain those mystery pounds.

You can wallpaper your walls with this flour paste, so imagine what it does inside your intestines.

Next on the list of ingredients is the sauce, which is loaded with sodium or salt. Sodium has several different effects on our body and one of these is an increase in blood pressure, which can trigger strokes and heart disease. Sodium also makes you retain excessive amounts of water which give you that bloated or puffy look.

The type of meat usually found on a pizza is pepperoni, or some other kind of sausage meat. These are prepared meats which have sodium nitrite to preserve them and to give them that red, meaty look, rather than a less appealing but natural greyish look created by fat content. Nitrites combine with amines in the body to form nitrosamines, which has been said to be

one of the most potent cancer-causing agents yet discovered.

You can't go wrong with the vegetables on a pizza, which are a good supply of vitamins and minerals. They are oven-baked so little of their nutrient value is lost. But

just remember when you're reaching for that take-out menu that vitamins make up only a small percentage of a pizza.

Finally, the cheese topping of a pizza may have a certain amount of protein, but it is also high in satu-

rated fat — the kind that is solid at room temperature. Excessive amounts of this type of fat lead to clogged arteries which, in turn, cause heart attacks.

Calgary facing a deficit

by Greg Halinda

The University of Calgary is facing a deficit in the event of unexpected costs this fiscal year. The university's surplus is about \$150 thousand on the 1986-87 budget of \$153 million. Last year the surplus was \$2.1 million.

"Funding for growth hasn't kept pace with growth," said Brian Tinker, VP Finance and Services at U of C. "It's not yet a crisis, but does remove budgeting flexibility."

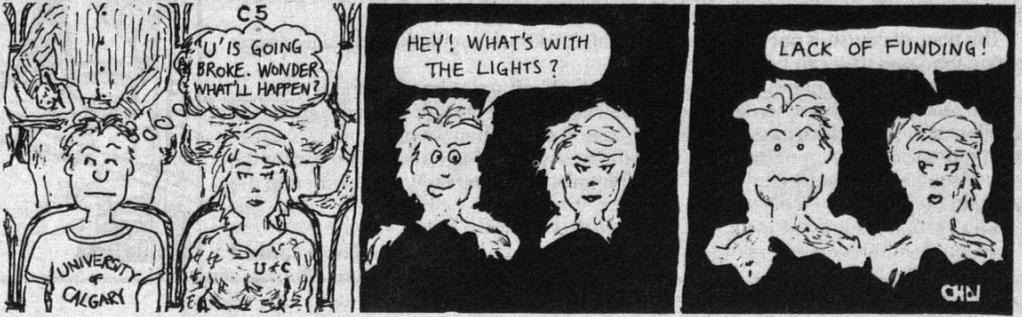
Enrollment at U of C is 16,700 full-time students and 4700 part-time students as of Sept. 10. Last year total enrollment at U of C was 19,248.

Tom McLaren, executive assistant to the minister of advanced education, said, "We've ensured our grants have kept pace with inflation, program growth, and enrollment growth. Last year's funding increase was four per cent."

McLaren says the U of C has

complained that they receive \$1 thousand less per student in grants than does the U of A. "The minister intends to initiate a review in the coming months on the U of C's concerns regarding inequity," said McLaren.

Tinker doesn't expect any immediate budget cuts. "The budget is balanced this year," he said. He sums up the situation as, "We've got far less cushion than we'd like to have."



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