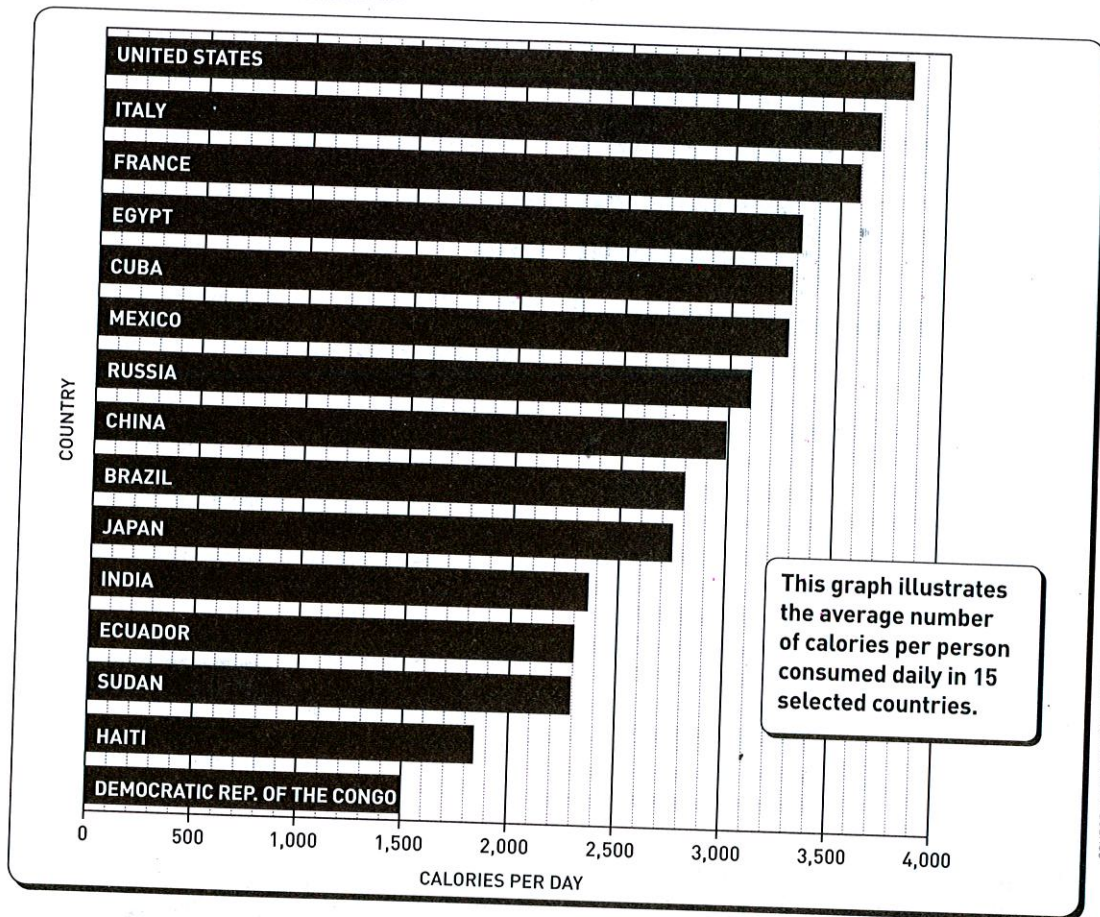


COUNTING CALORIES

The cover story on eating habits around the world (see "What We Eat," p. 14) shows how varied diets are from nation to nation.

On average, people need about 2,000 calories a day for a healthy diet, but may need more depending on their height, weight, gender, age, and level of physical activity.

This graph shows calorie consumption in various countries around the world. Which nations are underfed, and which could use a collective diet?



This graph illustrates the average number of calories per person consumed daily in 15 selected countries.

SOURCE: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE

ANALYZE THE GRAPH

- 1 Americans consume on average _____ times more calories each day than those in Congo, who consume the fewest in the world.
 - a 4
 - b 3
 - c 2.5
 - d 1.5
- 2 The average Italian consumes in one day what the average _____ consumes in two days.
 - a Haitian
 - b Indian
 - c Ecuadorian
 - d Cuban
- 3 A McDonald's Big Mac, large fries, and large Coke have a combined 1,350 calories. That's about _____ of what the average Japanese person eats daily.
 - a 43 percent
 - b 50 percent
 - c 55 percent
 - d 62 percent
- 4 People in which country consume 3,270 calories a day, on average?
 - a Egypt
 - b Russia
 - c Mexico
 - d China
- 5 This graph proves
 - a industrialized nations eat more.
 - b Africa is the hungriest continent.
 - c The U.S. and Europe have the highest rates of obesity.
 - d None of the above.

Discussion Questions

- Are you surprised at how much the average American eats? How close is the U.S. average to what you think you eat on most days? Is it a good thing that the U.S. leads the world in caloric consumption? Why or why not?
- Why might the Japanese, with the world's second-largest economy (after the U.S.), consume so much less than people in places like Egypt and Cuba?
- Why do you think fast food—both the types at fast-food restaurants, as well as foods that are prepackaged and ready to eat—have become popular around the world? How might this affect calorie counts?
- How do you decide what to eat? Do calories and nutritional value play a role in your eating habits? How might you eat healthier?