

**FOSS Food and Nutrition Module  
Glossary  
2005 Edition**

**Acid:** A chemical that has a characteristic sour taste. (TG)

**Additive:** A substance added to a food to preserve it or to increase its effectiveness. (SS)

**Adipose cell:** A body cell that stores fat. (SS)

**Alveoli:** The tiny air sacs in the lungs where gases pass into and out of the blood. (SS)

**Anus:** The end of the digestive system through which solid waste leaves the body. (SS)

**Arteries:** The blood vessels that carry blood from the heart to the body. (SS)

**Artificial sweetener:** A manufactured chemical used to sweeten food. (SS)

**Ascorbic acid:** Vitamin C. (SS)

**Atrium:** Either of the two upper chambers of the four-chambered heart. (SS)

**Bacteria:** Single-celled organisms; microorganisms. (SS)

**Bladder:** The organ that holds urine until it is eliminated. (SS)

**Blood:** A fluid that nourishes all the cells in the multicellular organisms. (SS)

**Blood vessel:** A tube through which blood flows in the body. (SS)

**Bronchus:** An air tube that brings air into the lungs and alveoli.: (SS)

**By-product:** A secondary product to the main one produced. (SS)

**Calcium:** A metallic element necessary for building strong bones. (SS)

**Calorie:** A unit of heat; a measure of the energy in food. (SS, TG)

**Capillary:** The smallest type of blood vessel. Gases, nutrients, and wastes are transferred between capillaries and cells. (SS)

**Carbohydrates:** A group of nutrients that provide energy; sugars and starches. (TG, SS)

**Carbon dioxide:** A colorless, odorless gas in the atmosphere given off by plants and animals. (TG)

**Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>):** The waste gas produced during cellular respiration. Plants use carbon dioxide during photosynthesis to make food. (SS)

**Cell:** The basic unit of life. (SS)

**Cellular respiration:** The process by which energy for life is released from food in cells. (SS)

**Chemical reaction:** A change that occurs as a result of mixing two or more materials together. A reaction forms new materials with different properties from the original. (TG)

**Chemistry:** The branch of science that deals with the composition, structure, and properties of matter. (SS)

**Cholesterol:** A waxy substance found in human tissues. (SS)

**Circulatory system:** The systems of blood vessels and organs that transports blood to all the cells in the body. (SS)

**Colon:** The large intestine, where solid waste is compacted in preparation for elimination. (SS)

**Concentration:** The amount of material dissolved in a measure of liquid; the more material dissolved in the liquid, the more concentrated the solution. (TG)

**Contagious:** Transmitted by contact or by some other means. (SS)

**Deficiency:** Lack of an adequate amount. (SS)

**Diabetes:** A disease in which the body cannot process sugar efficiently. (SS)

**Digestion:** The process by which food is broken down into a form the body can use. (SS)

**Digestive system:** The organs and structures responsible for the digestion of food. The digestive system includes the mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, and large intestine. (SS)

**Enzyme:** A protein molecule that speeds up chemical reactions but is not changed itself. (SS)

**Esophagus:** The tube connecting the mouth and the stomach. (SS)

**Fats:** A group of nutrients that provide energy and building blocks for development of some body systems. (TG, SS)

**Food:** Anything that people eat that provides energy and allows them to grow. (TG)

**Fructose:** A sugar found naturally in fruits. (SS)

**Glucose:** A sugar found in fruits and vegetables; the sugar metabolized in your cells. (SS)

**Indicator:** An object, material, or organism that shows the presence of certain materials. (TG)

**Ingredient:** One material that goes into a mixture. (SS)

**Insulin:** A protein hormone that enables the body to use sugar and other carbohydrates by regulating sugar metabolism. (SS)

**Kidney:** An organ that filters and cleans blood. (SS)

**Lactose:** A sugar found in milk. (SS)

**Large intestine:** The part of the digestive system, between the small intestine and the rectum, where water is removed from the solid waste. (SS)

**Lung:** The organ in animals where gases, like oxygen and carbon dioxide, pass between the atmosphere and the blood. (SS)

**Metabolism:** The process of breaking down food to yield energy to keep an organism alive and functioning. (TG, SS)

**Minerals:** Substances that work with vitamins, necessary for growth and development. Minerals come from soil. People get them by eating plants or by eating animals that eat plants. (SS)

**Molecule:** The smallest part of a substance that is made up of two or more atoms. (SS)

**Multicellular:** An organism composed of many cells. (SS)

**Nutrient:** A chemical found in food that helps keep an organism alive and active. (TG, SS)

**Nutrition:** The science or study of proper balanced diets to promote health, especially in humans. (SS, TG)

**Nutritionist:** A person who studies foods and diets. (SS)

**Obesity:** The condition of having an excess amount of body fat. (SS)

**Organ:** A part of an organism that performs a function for the organism, like a heart, lung, or kidney. (SS)

**Organism:** Any living thing. (SS)

**Oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>):** A gas produced by plants during photosynthesis, which is used by all plants and animals during cellular respiration. (SS)

**Phloem:** The long cells through which nutrients such as sugars are distributed in a plant. (SS)

**Photosynthesis:** The process by which green plants make food from carbon dioxide and water in the presence of light. (SS)

**Plaque:** A sticky film composed of bacteria, food, and saliva that forms on your teeth; also fatty deposits in the arteries that may lead to a heart attack. (SS)

**Proteins:** A group of nutrients that provide energy and building blocks for growth and repair of body tissues; found in meats and vegetables. (TG, SS)

**Rectum:** The last part of the large intestine, ending in the opening, called the anus. (SS)

**Red blood cell:** One type of blood cell. Red blood cells carry oxygen to, and carbon dioxide from, other cells to stay alive. (SS)

**Resource:** A material available for use by cells to stay alive. (SS)

**Rickets:** A disease in which the bones become soft and deformed due to a lack of vitamin D. (SS)

**Saliva:** The liquid produced in the mouth that aids digestion. (SS)

**Salivary gland:** A gland that empties its secretions into the mouth to start the process of digestion. (SS)

**Scurvy:** A disease caused by a lack of vitamin C and characterized by loosening of the teeth, softening of the gums, and bleeding under the skin. (SS)

**Sickle-cell anemia:** A disease in which the red blood cells become sickle-shaped instead of round. (SS)

**Small intestine:** The part of the digestive system, between the stomach and large intestine that absorbs nutrients from digested food. (SS)

**Sodium:** A soft, silvery, metallic element necessary for human nutrition. Table salt contains sodium. (SS)

**Stomach:** The organ where food is reduced to mush by acid and muscle activity. (SS)

**Stroke:** A sudden weakening, loss of consciousness, or loss of the power to move or feel caused by the blockage of blood vessels in the brain. (SS)

**Sucrose:** A sugar found in sugar beets and sugar cane. (SS)

**Sugar:** A simple chemical used as an energy source by most life forms. (TG)

**Supplement:** A source of vitamins or minerals that is taken in addition to food. (SS)

**Tissue:** A group of similar cells working together to perform a function. (SS)

**Trachea:** The air tube connecting the nose and mouth to the lungs. (SS)

**Transport system:** A system for carrying or moving substances from one place to another. (SS)

**Ureter:** A tube carrying urine from the kidney to the bladder. (SS)

**Urine:** Liquid waste produced by the kidneys. (SS)

**Valve:** A flap that opens and closes like a door to control the flow of blood. (SS)

**Vascular plant:** A plant with an internal system of tubes that transports resources and nutrients to its roots, stems, and leaves. (SS)

**Veins:** The blood vessels that carry blood from the body to the heart. (SS)

**Ventricle:** Either of the two lower chambers of the four-chambered heart. (SS)

**Villi:** The tiny fingerlike structures lining the small intestine through which nutrients pass from the digestive systems into the blood. (SS)

**Viral:** Caused by a virus. (SS)

**Viruses:** A large group of disease-producing agents smaller than bacteria and dependent on living cells for reproduction and growth. (SS)

**Vitamin C:** An essential acid in human nutrition. (TG)

**Vitamins:** Nutrients needed in small quantities that are essential for good health. (SS)

**Xylem:** The hollow cells of a plant that transport water and minerals to plant cells. (SS)

**Yeast:** A single-celled organism in the fungus kingdom. (TG)