

I sent our garden seed order to the company we favor this past week. As I went down the list, noting the vegetable seeds we regularly get and adding a few new varieties to try this coming spring, I thought about food. This is a topic that is on our minds a great deal—from putting seeds or plants into the soil on through the whole process of growing food, preserving for winter, cooking, and finally, “what’s for dinner?”

It seems to me that there are three basic reasons we try to raise most of our own food. First, of course, we know that we are eating vegetables and berries that have been grown in healthy, fertile soil without the addition of artificial fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides. Second, our homegrown food is, as much as possible, eaten fresh seasonally. In our climate, of course, we also rely on rootcellaring, fermenting, canning, and freezing to provide us with food during the cold season. Third, we can indulge our other senses with colorful food. We plan ahead when we order seeds so that we have bright greens, vivid yellows, oranges, and reds, deep purples, and earthy browns and tans. Our meals, both during the growing season, and during the winter, are full of beauty for our eyes as well as healthful calories for our bodies.

It seems to me that variety in foods—both in color and taste—is one of the ways in which we keep ourselves satisfied without frequent indulgent in the “fast food” sugar, salt, grease triangle. If our meals look “good enough to eat,” they probably are.

Our eyes urge us to eat foods of different colors. Now, reading the website and blogs of an M.D. niece, I note that there are reasons beyond esthetics for variety in the hues of our vegetables and fruits. It really is better for us to choose foods that are rich in color and across the spectrum. This new web site is quickly becoming a great resource for people who want to eat a more healthful diet and still enjoy delicious food. You can follow Dr. Michelle at www.drmmseguin.com.

And, none of us needs medical training, nutrition lessons, or outside resources to teach ourselves to choose foods of various colors when we are planning our meals and cooking. But, it doesn’t necessarily mean that selecting the multicolored M&Ms is going to enhance one’s health!

I took a picture of my plate today—spareribs cooked slowly and glazed with homemade peach preserves, tomato sauce, and soy sauce; broccoli from the freezer; Satina yellow “smashed” potatoes; and the last of the red cabbage from last summer, made into salad with a dressing of maple syrup, balsamic vinegar, and olive oil. It tasted as good as it

looks.

