“You are what you eat” is a quote with substantial warning, especially when it is estimated that 90% of all human health problems are food related (Rock et al., 1996). Today, the American diet usually means eating fewer than the recommended “5 to 9 a day” consumption of fruits and vegetables. Fruits, vegetables, and nuts play a major role in human health, as they are nutritious sources of vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber (Quebedeaux and Eisa, 1990), and antioxidants (DeMeyer et al., 2004). Supplements, i.e., vitamin pills, all too often are the first or even the only choice consumers make when enriching their diet in essential vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber; but vitamin pills are not the solution (Rock et al., 1996, 2004). The beneficial effects or epidemiologic links between vitamins A (carotenoids), B complex (biotin, cyanocobalamin, folic acid, niacin, thiamine, pantothenic acid, pyridoxine, and riboflavin), C (ascorbic acid), and E (tocopherols) and human health and wellness is due to their dietary intake from food rather than from vitamin supplements (Rock et al., 1996). Nearly 600 different carotenoids occur in plant foods, all in low, nontoxic doses that together help promote human health, but only a handful of carotenoids are found in vitamin pills and often as acetates, which have questionable bioactivity (Duthie, 1999). Vitamin pills may even be detrimental to human health; for example, ascorbic acid may be either an anti- or a pro-oxidant depending on its concentration (DeMeyer et al., 2004).

Although people know that they should eat fruits and vegetables as part of their daily diet, many people do not like to eat vegetables (Drewnowski and Gomez-Carneros, 2000). The purpose of this colloquium was to learn how horticultural practices can make fruits and vegetables flavorful, nutritious, and convenient to eat so that people will eat more fruits and vegetables. Two of the colloquium speakers, Karen Glanz of Emory University and Hwa-Young Baik of Coca-Cola North America, have published the substance of their talks elsewhere (Baik et al., 2003; Glanz et al., 1998). Glanz spoke about how taste, nutrition, cost, and convenience affect Americans’ choices in food. Baik described work comparing the flavor of different varieties of broccoli containing various amounts of the anti-cancer compounds, glucosinolates. The papers that follow describe how environmental factors and processing affect the nutritive contents of fruits and vegetables.

**Introduction to the Colloquium**

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**Literature Cited**


