

## Summary Activity

### Sociocultural and Ethical Concerns

**What is the main idea about this key knowledge & key skill? (Two or three sentences in your own words)**

The main idea of the key knowledge and key skills mentioned is to understand and discuss the sociocultural and ethical concerns that Australian food consumers have, as well as how these concerns impact individual food choices and the availability of different food options. This involves recognising the various factors that influence food-related decisions, such as cultural backgrounds, values, beliefs, sustainability considerations, and ethical principles. The key skills emphasise the ability to engage in thoughtful discussions about sociocultural, sustainability, and ethical concerns that shape food systems.

**Define each of the terms listed below:**

Ethical Concern

Ethical concerns refer to the alignment of actions with an individual's personal sense of what is morally right or wrong. They involve making choices and decisions based on moral principles and values, particularly in relation to the impact of one's actions on the environment, animals, and people involved in food production.

Sociocultural Concern

Sociocultural concerns are shaped by social interactions, cultural dynamics, and the unique experiences, beliefs, and traditions of different groups within a society. Sociocultural concerns reflect the specific issues and perspectives of different groups based on factors such as background, education, income, location, age, gender, and social identity.

**What are the similarities between ethical and sociocultural concerns?**

Both ethical concerns and sociocultural concerns are based on values and beliefs held by individuals or specific groups within a society. Both concepts are subjective, as they are influenced by personal perspectives and cultural backgrounds.

Both ethical concerns and sociocultural concerns can influence individuals' behaviors and choices, particularly in the context of food decisions.

**What are the differences between ethical and sociocultural concerns?**

Ethical concerns primarily revolve around moral principles and considerations of what is right or wrong. On the other hand, sociocultural concerns are more specific to particular groups, communities, or societies. They are shaped by social identities, traditions, practices, and norms within these specific contexts.

Ethical concerns in the food system often focus on issues such as animal welfare, environmental sustainability, fair treatment for workers, and health impacts. Sociocultural concerns, on the other hand, emphasise the values, behaviours, and norms within specific groups or communities. They may include considerations like religious or cultural dietary restrictions, traditional food practices, and cultural heritage associated with food.

Ethical concerns are often discussed at an individual level, emphasising personal moral responsibility and decision-making.

Sociocultural concerns are more collective in nature, focusing on the values, beliefs, and norms shared within a specific group or community. They are influenced by social interactions and cultural dynamics.

**Provide some examples of ethical and sociocultural concerns below.**

Ethical Concerns	Sociocultural Concerns
Animal welfare, environmental sustainability, fair treatment for workers, genetic modification, and food waste reduction	Religious or cultural dietary restrictions, traditional food practices, cultural heritage and identity, culinary diversity, Indigenous food sovereignty, gender roles and food preparation, and social rituals and celebrations.
List three food products below that address an ethical or sociocultural concern.	Which ethical and/or sociocultural concern each food product addresses?
Fair Trade Certified Coffee	Fair trade coffee addresses ethical concerns related to fair treatment for workers and social justice. It ensures that coffee farmers receive fair prices for their crops and also promotes environmental sustainability and community development initiatives.  It aligns with the values of individuals and communities who prioritise supporting ethical and sustainable practices in the food system.
.Halal Meat	Halal meat addresses sociocultural concerns by catering to the dietary restrictions and preferences of Muslim consumers.
Indigenous Foods	Indigenous foods, such as native ingredients in Australia, address sociocultural concerns by promoting the preservation of cultural heritage, traditional food customs, and indigenous wisdom. These foods reflect the unique cultural identities of indigenous communities and their deep connection to the land and traditional food practices.

## Exam Preparation

### Multiple-Choice Questions (5 marks)

**Choose** the response that is correct or that **best answers** the question.

1. The term 'ethical' refers to?
  - a. A cultural practice observed in various societies.
  - b. The process of learning a new language.
  - c. Principles and values concerning what is right and wrong behaviour.
  - d. The characteristics of accepted behaviour.

The correct answer is A.

This is the right answer because it directly relates to the treatment and welfare of animals in the food system. The confinement and treatment of animals in certain farming practices is a significant ethical concern for many people who believe in the humane treatment of all animals.

2. The term "sociocultural" refers to:
  - a. The rules and regulations of a society.
  - b. The values, behaviours, and norms that are part of a specific community or society.
  - c. The geographical location of a society.
  - d. The political structure of a society.

The correct answer is B.

This is because the term "sociocultural" combines "socio," which relates to society and social interactions, and "cultural," which pertains to shared beliefs, values, and practices of a community or society. Therefore, the term "sociocultural" is used to describe the values, behaviors, and norms that a specific community or society shares, embodying both social interactions and cultural practices and beliefs.

3. Sociocultural concerns about food can be influenced by all the following factors EXCEPT:
  - a. Background and education
  - b. Income and location
  - c. Age and gender
  - d. Favourite colour

The correct answer is D.

Answer A, B and C are all sociocultural factors. Answer D is a personal preference.

4. According to a 2019 Statista report, a significant percentage of Australians identified themselves as vegans, vegetarians, meat reducers, and flexitarians. Which of the following food products might a company consider developing to cater to the dietary preferences indicated by this report?
  - a. A new range of meat-based fast-food burgers.
  - b. A variety of dairy-heavy desserts.
  - c. Plant-based meat substitutes and protein-rich grains.
  - d. A line of seafood snacks.

The correct answer is C.

The report indicates a considerable proportion of Australians identified as vegans, vegetarians, meat reducers, or flexitarians. All of these groups either eliminate or limit their consumption of meat, with vegans additionally avoiding all animal products. Thus, a food product that caters to these preferences would ideally be plant-based.

5. Which of the following ethical concerns in the food system is most directly related to animal welfare?

- a. The intensive confinement and inhumane treatment of animals in some livestock farming practices.
- b. The use of pesticides and fertilisers in crop production can contaminate water sources.
- c. The unfair wages and poor working conditions often faced by farm workers.
- d. The environmental impact of excessive packaging in processed food products.

The correct answer is A.

This is the right answer because it directly relates to the treatment and welfare of animals in the food system. The confinement and treatment of animals in certain farming practices is a significant ethical concern for many people who believe in the humane treatment of all animals.

## Short Answer Questions (15 marks)

### Question 1 (6 marks)

In the table below, identify one sociocultural concern that animal activists and parents of school-aged children may have with regard to the food system. Explain why this might be a sociocultural concern to each group.

Groups	Sociocultural Concern	Explanation
Animal Activists	For 2 x 1 mark, the student needed to identify one sociocultural concern of each group.  The ethical treatment of animals.	For 2 x 2 marks, the student needed to explain why this could be a sociocultural concern to each group.  The student needed This group often opposes factory farming, where animals are frequently kept in close quarters, leading to stress, disease, and a lack of natural behaviours.
Parents of School-aged Children	The nutritional value of the food provided in school canteens.	With the rising rates of childhood obesity and related health issues, parents may worry that school meals are not providing their children with the necessary nutrients for healthy growth and development.

### Question 2 (3 marks)

Identify one food product that each of the following consumers might be inclined to buy based on their ethical concerns:

For 3 x 1 marks, the student needed to identify one ethical concern that might influence a consumer's decision to purchase each of the products listed.

Ethical Concern	Food Product
Someone concerned about the ethical treatment and fair compensation of farmers and workers in the cocoa industry.	Chocolates labelled with a certified Fairtrade logo
Someone who is aware of the harm that synthetic pesticides and fertilisers can cause to the environment, including soil degradation, water contamination, and harm to wildlife.	A range of fresh fruit with a certified organic logo.
Someone who is concerned about the conditions in which hens are kept in conventional or cage-based systems, including lack of space, inability to exhibit natural behaviours, and associated stress and health issues.	Free-range Eggs

### Question 3 (6 marks)

Identify three ethical concerns that Australian food consumers may have and explain how these concerns could impact the range of foods available on the market.

Ethical Concern One

For 1 mark, the student needed to identify one ethical concern that Australian consumers may have,

For 1 mark, the student needed to explain how these concerns could impact the range of foods available on the market.

Consumers may be worried about the environmental impact of their food choices, including factors like carbon emissions, water use, and pollution from farming practices.

This concern can lead to increased demand for locally sourced, organic, or plant-based foods, encouraging more retailers to stock these items.

#### Ethical Concern Two

For 1 mark, the student needed to identify one ethical concern that Australian consumers may have,

For 1 mark, the student needed to explain how these concerns could impact the range of foods available on the market.

Concerns about overfishing and the health of marine ecosystems can influence seafood choices.

This has led to a growing demand for sustainably sourced seafood. As more consumers become conscious of these issues, there has been an increase in the variety and availability of sustainably sourced seafood products on the market.

#### Ethical Concern Three

For 1 mark, the student needed to identify one ethical concern that Australian consumers may have,

For 1 mark, the student needed to explain how these concerns could impact the range of foods available on the market.

Concerns about the use of genetically modified organisms in food production due to potential health and environmental impacts.

This concern has led to an increased demand for non-GMO food products and has encouraged some food producers and retailers to offer and clearly label non-GMO options.