

Unit 1: Space Food

Narrator: Since the start of human space flight, NASA has worked to improve the quality and variety of food for its astronauts. NASA food scientists design special menus that provide astronauts with the food they need to live in space for long durations.

Eating on Earth is very different from eating in space. Space food needs to be easy to hold and eat in zero gravity. It also needs to be healthy and taste good.

This is NASA's Space Food Systems Laboratory. Here, NASA's space food scientists work to improve the astronauts' food. It's important that the astronauts get a balanced diet. A lot of the food the astronauts eat is freeze-dried. When food is freeze-dried, most of the water is removed from inside it, so the food becomes much lighter. Also, freeze-dried food can be kept for a long time without needing to be stored in a fridge.

Astronauts rarely get the chance to make their own food, but it does happen on special occasions. These astronauts are enjoying a pizza party! When Italian astronaut Paolo Nespoli mentioned to his team on Earth how much he missed his favorite food, NASA sent a variety of ingredients on the next supply ship. This included pre-cooked pizza bases, tomato sauce, cheese wedges, and various topping options, including olives and pepperoni. The astronauts used scissors to slice the floating pizzas, but only after letting them spin around in microgravity for fun.