

## Viewpoint: Many fears around ‘processed foods’ not based on science

[Most] of us don’t have a clear understanding of what “processed food” means. Many foods we like to think of as “whole” and “natural” undergo a fair amount of processing. As food scientist [Robert Shewfelt](#) explains in his book [\*In Defense of Processed Food\*](#), baby carrots have to be de-leaved, washed, disinfected with chlorine, chilled, cut, peeled, and polished prior to bagging. Bagged salads are shredded and triple washed, also with chlorine. Most milk in the U.S. is fortified, homogenized, and pasteurized, and that’s a good thing, as pasteurization [greatly reduces the risk of foodborne illness](#).

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*But what about the chemicals?*... Well, technically, everything is a chemical. Just look at the makeup of [this all-natural banana](#): all chemicals. And organic pop tarts and non-GMO chips aren’t any healthier, or less processed, than those made by Kellogg’s or Lay’s.

Weighing the health risk of certain ingredients, it’s important to remember that old maxim: The dose makes the poison. Most preservatives, additives, and other chemicals in our food are present only in trace amounts that aren’t dangerous or unhealthy. For example, a July 2017 New York *Times* article on boxed macaroni and cheese warned consumers about the presence of dangerous phthalates, but what [the article didn’t explain](#) is that the levels detected were minuscule.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [‘Processed Food’ Gets an Unfair Bad Rap](#)**