

A Polarizing Food

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My two eldest sons had long careers in the pizza business.

William V. Raszka, MD, Associate Editor, Pediatrics

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My two eldest sons had long careers in the pizza business. Both spent many years working at a local “gourmet delivery pizza” restaurant. We would often discuss how to make the crust a bit thinner and crisper, the maximum time dough could be left at room temperature before being spun, the quality of the ingredients, and new pizza combinations. I would routinely ask each the most popular pizza sold at the restaurant. Interestingly, they usually replied that a Hawaiian special that included pineapple was one of their best sellers. **As reported in *The Wall Street Journal***, few issues are as controversial in the

food world as whether or not pineapple belongs on pizza. The topic has been debated by world leaders (Iceland’s president, Gudni Johannesson, is opposed while Canada’s Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is pro-pineapple), viewed as a marker for tolerance and inclusion, and debated on numerous cooking and talk shows. When an Olympic gold medalist announced she liked pineapple on pizza on a late night show, a popular celebrity chef walked off in mock horror. On a dating site that matches users by their mutual dislikes, Hawaiian pizza was the most widely detested food of 2017. What prompts such intense passion? After all, many things can go on top of a pizza and taste great. Perhaps that it really isn’t Hawaiian might play a role. It could be a bit of snobbery. Maybe it is due to its inauspicious roots in the early 1960s, when a Greek restaurateur began serving it at his family diner in southern Ontario, Canada because he was trying to make use of canned pineapple. Regardless, the rules of the Raszka family are quite clear. We like thin crust pizza. The crust should be crispy. A tomato base is good but white pizzas are also good. Go light on the cheese. The boys like to add meat products while Rose and I like many different vegetables. And, finally, eat fresh pineapple for dessert.

