Outline for GEOG 107 Food Unit Essay

QUESTION: Explain why the United States has seen sharply higher rates of obesity and diabetes. Use proximate and especially ultimate factors.

PROXIMATE we are eating more calories, especially carbohydrates, including sugar and other processed foods.

ULTIMATE Highly processed foods are now more widely available, dominating supermarkets

food industry markets to children, affecting lifelong food habits, and everyone, using scientific knowledge of cravings, bliss points, addictions

profit maximization imperative of industry encourages supersizing & other unhealthy offerings

food industry research utilizes science to maximize taste appeal and sometimes addictiveness of food (esp. carbohydrates). All age groups and demographics targeted, including children.

cheaper grains allow processed foods to be made at lower cost than before

federal subsidies compel/assist farmers in producing grain below the real cost of production

corporate political influence often results in pro-food industry legislation and lax regulation, even if this has negative choice and public health effects

industry influence on research and advertising distorts public perception of what healthy food is, emphasizes consumer choice as explanation of obesity, denies that its products cause obesity etc in people. (tobacco strategy)