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The Science of Cooking

In 2006, a British magazine called *Restaurant* listed the top three chefs in the world: one in Spain, another in France and the third in Britain. What all of these chefs had in common is that they had been influenced by a new approach to cooking called “molecular gastronomy.” This term was invented in the 1980s by Nicholas Kurti, a physicist, and Herve This, a chemist, to describe the scientific study of the (26) of food.

Of course, scientists have been studying food for a long time. However, they have mainly studied how different foods affect human health, rather than how cooking methods affect the flavor and other qualities of food. Over time, the ingredients used in cooking have changed greatly. (27), the methods used to cook them have stayed largely the same. Herve This has especially focused on studying common cooking beliefs, such as that salt should always be added to water when cooking green vegetables. According to him, these ideas often have no basis in scientific fact.

Herve This has also been studying the effects of different flavors on one another and coming up with suggestions for new combination of ingredients. It is this aspect of his work that has had the biggest (28). For example, Heston Blumenthal, a chef who has been particularly influenced by Herve This, has become famous for his unusual dishes. Bacon and ice cream served on toast, or oysters and fruit jelly may sound strange at first. Yet they have proved very popular with both critics and customers. Herve This, however, believes that his research may someday have an even more (29) use. The reason is that his research could help solve the global problem of people eating unhealthily. He hopes that, by making healthier foods taste better, molecular gastronomy will encourage people to make food choices that can prevent serious diseases.

26. a. vitamins b. shortages c. cost d. preparation
27. a. In addition b. On the other hand
 c. Therefore d. Fortunately
28. a. recovery b. chance c. impact d. loss
29. a. important b. dangerous c. private d. entertaining