



Where does our food come from?

BACKGROUND

People have an increased awareness and understanding of the concept of ‘food kilometres’ (the distance a food travels from where it is produced to where it reaches the consumer)– Sustainability needs to reconsider how and why foods are transported across the world, the resources involved in the production of food, and the environmental impacts that can result from this. Foods that travel a long distance and have many ‘food miles’ consume a much larger amount of fuel, and thus release more carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. An increase in these gases contributes significantly to global warming and climate change – the steady rise in the earth’s temperature.

AIM

The aim of this activity is to become aware of:

- ✓ where foods are produced, and consider the environmental issues associated with transporting foods over long distances.
- ✓ about the concept of ‘food kilometres’
- ✓ the fact that personal choices are essential: purchasing items locally, made within our region, reduce ‘food miles’ and, as a result, our impact on the environment and global warming.

PROCEDURE

1. Each student receives a food item worksheet and is asked to find out the country the food comes from.
2. Students work during a week. Reading labels in the supermarket, asking in the market and checking food labels at home., students should look for the words ‘Product of –’, ‘Made in –’ and ‘Imported from –’. If necessary, practice reading different labels and find out other countries foods are imported from.
3. Students swap information between themselves once they have figured out where a type of food comes from.
4. Students complete together the list of countries where the food items come from.
5. Students identify these places on the world map, so students visually understand the concept of food items travelling from close and far away.
6. Students look for information and explain what ‘food kilometres’ means.
7. Students find out the km that each food is travelling. They can use the Food miles calculator and then transform miles into kilometres: <http://www.foodmiles.com/>
8. Students complete the worksheet sharing the this new information information
9. Students answer the questions:
 - a) In which way food production impacts on the environment?
 - b) How can we reduce our impact of ‘food kilometres’ on the environment?
10. Students summarize their findings in maps using arrows to reflect where food comes from.



