

EAT CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Ask the students to examine the food seasonality poster in the cafeteria. Ask them to look for two fruits on the poster that are excellent sources of vitamin C. *Answer: Oranges and Strawberries.* Ask the students: Of these two foods, which one is typically harvested in California, Florida, and Arizona during the winter season? *Answer: Oranges*

LEARN CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective

Students will understand what buying locally means and why they should try to do this.

10 Minute Lesson

Through teacher guided activity students will learn just how far some food must travel to make it on there plate and why purchasing locally grown food can have a positive impact on the environment and the local economy.

LIVE HOME ACTIVITY

Have students go home and see if they can find the nearest farm to them, they should find out how far the farm is from their home, what type of product the farm grows and how that product is used. Have them report back to the class with the findings.

Teacher's Notes

Background

Buying your food locally is good for your local economy, good for family farmers, good for your family's health, and good for the environment. Below you will find a list of common fruits and vegetables and what states they are grown in.

Fruit or Vegetable	Where it's grown
Apples	WA, NY, CA, MI, PA, NC, VA
Blueberries	MI, OR, NJ, NC, ME, WA
Broccoli	CA (90%), WA, ME, WI, OH, CO, OR, TX, FL
Grapes	CA (97%), AZ, MI, NY
Oranges	FL (70%), CA, AZ
Potatoes	ID, WA, ND, WI, CA, MI, ME, MN, CO, OR
Asparagus	CA, WA, MI, IL, NJ
Carrots	CA, CO, MI, FL
Pears	WA, OR, CA

10 Minute Lesson

Teacher to lead discussion and complete activity with students:

The concept of buying local is simply to buy food (or any good or service) produced, grown, or raised as close to your home as possible. With industrialization, our food is now grown and processed in fewer and fewer locations, meaning it has to travel further to reach the average consumer's refrigerator. Although this method of production is considered efficient and economically profitable for some corporations, it can be harmful to the environment, consumers and rural communities.

Teacher will ask questions and allow children to respond before reading the correct answer:

What part of the United States do you think our food comes from? *Answers: On farms all over the US, farmers around the United States grow different kinds of food, depending on the weather and climate in their particular area. If farmers can't grow a certain kind of food, people in that area can import it from other places that can grow it. Thanks to the hard work of farmers here in the US, we have all kinds of food to eat! You may have some farmers right near where you live that grow food that you eat.*

What are the benefits are of eating foods that have been grown closer to home? *Answer: Less gas is used to transport items across a county than across the US or even across the world, food is fresher because it has been harvested more recently, supporting local farmers by buying products directly from them.*

What are some things you could do to decrease your ecological footprint? *Answer: Eat more fresh produce and fewer foods that come in a package. Purchase fruits and vegetables from a local farmers market rather than a large grocery store. Walk or ride a bike instead of driving when possible, eat less fast food which has a lot of packaging to throw away, unplug electronic items when you are not using them, use less hot water, and recycle. These types of habits help us live a healthy lifestyle and protect the environment.*

Read the paragraph below and have students guess the answers to fill in the blanks: In the U.S., the average grocery store's produce travels nearly (1500) miles between the farm where it was grown and your refrigerator. About (40%) of our fruit is produced overseas and, even though broccoli is likely grown within (20) miles of the average American's house, the broccoli we buy at the supermarket travels an average (1800) miles to get there. Notably, (9%) of our red meat comes from foreign countries, including locations as far away as Australia and New Zealand. Source: www.sustainable.org

Introduce and explain the EAT Cafeteria Connection and LEARN Home Activity to the students.

Optional Enrichment Idea

Have students research about foods that are grown locally in your area. Have them write a short report including information about how the food is grown, when it is harvested, the nutrients the food contains, and ways it may be eaten. Have the students share their reports with the class.