Lesson 1 Middle School **"From the Farm to Your Plate"**

EAT
CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Ask the students to examine the food seasonality poster in the cafeteria in order to identify two root vegetables that grow under the ground. Have the students guess which one takes longer to grow. *Answers: Radishes (about 1 month), Carrots (3 months)*

LEARN
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective
Students will understand the different paths that fruits and vegetables can take to get from the farm to their plates.

10 Minute Lesson
From the information that the students find out in the lunch room, the students will trace and measure the distance the fruits and vegetables travel to get from the farms to the school.

LIVE
HOME ACTIVITY

Students should look for a recipe at home or on the internet that includes at least two fruits or vegetables and determine if those fruits and vegetables are in season at the time. If they are not, what fruits or vegetables could be substituted to make the recipe more seasonal for that part of the country? Recipes can be shared with the class.

Teacher's Notes

Background

The Nature of Fruits & Vegetables

- Fruits and vegetables grow in many different places such as trees, underground, above ground and on vines.
- The growth of fruit and vegetables depend on the climate where they are grown.
- Just like other plants, all fruits and vegetables have a life cycle, some fruits and vegetables may go through their life cycle in a few months whereas others take a full year to go through their life cycle.
- Many of the fruits and vegetables consumed in schools are not grown locally and thus travel far to get to our plates.
- The further the fruit and/or vegetable needs to travel to get from the farm to our plates, the bigger impact it has on our environment.

Classroom Activity

Lead Group Discussion- Discuss and measure the different distances it takes for the various fruits and vegetables to get from the farm to different cities around the country. ***Note: If you choose, you can measure the distance from the farms to your city.*** **Choose at least one fruit and one vegetable to discuss and measure. Materials needed: Map of the U.S. and ruler**

1. **Fruit #1: Apple from Benton Harbor, Michigan to Chicago, IL**
    - Have the students point out Benton Harbor, Michigan an Chicago, IL on the map
    - Have the students measure the distance (mileage) between Benton Harbor and Chicago.
      Answer:86.6 miles
    - Make a chart and plot this on the chart.
2. **Fruit #2: Oranges from Kissimmee, Florida to Dallas, TX**
    - Have the students point out Kissimmee, Florida and Dallas, TX on the map
    - Have the students measure the distance (mileage) between Kissimmee and Dallas
      Answer: 1141 miles
    - Plot this on the chart
3. **Vegetable #1: Corn from Bloomington, Illinois to Buffalo, NY**
    - Have the students point out Bloomington, Illinois and Buffalo, NY on the map
    - Have the students measure the distance (mileage) between Bloomington and Buffalo
      Answer: 643 miles
    - Plot this on the chart
4. **Vegetable #2: Baby Carrots from San Luis Obispo, California and St. Louis, MO**
    - Have the students point out San Luis Obispo, California and St. Louis, MO on the map
    - Have the students measure the distance (mileage) between San Luis Obispo and St. Louis
      Answer: 2058 miles
    - Plot this on the chart

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

Optional Enrichment Idea

Have the students research the fruits and vegetables that they used for their recipes. They should go to the grocery store or market closest to them to determine where these items come from and measure the distance between those locations and their home.