

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 and to consider during which season those fruits are typically harvested. *Answers: Oranges (winter), Strawberries (spring)*

LEARN

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective

Students will be able to explain what the Ecological Footprint of food is and list one food item that has a small footprint and another with a larger foot print.

10 Minute Lesson

Through teacher-guided discussion, students will explore the differences between locally produced food and food grown across the country and across the world. Discussion will enable students to want to choose more locally grown foods. Students will gain understanding of where their food comes from and what an ecological footprint is.

LIVE

HOME ACTIVITY

Have students go home and see if they can find the nearest farm, 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

Students will learn by teacher guided question and answer: Teacher will ask questions and allow children to respond before reading the correct answer.

1. What states do you think our food comes from?

Answers: Our food comes from all over the United States. Farmers 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 in one area of the US, then people in that area can import it from other places that can grow it. Thanks to the hard work of farmers all around the United States, we have all kinds of food to eat all year long! You may have some farmers right near where you live that grow food that you eat.

2. Teacher will call on 2 students to define food miles.

*Answer: According to Wikipedia, **Food miles** is a term which refers to the distance food travels from the time of its production until it reaches the consumer.*

3. Teacher will ask what 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.

4. Ask the class to image their footprint in the sand or dirt, then read the following paragraph:

A footprint actually displaces sand or dirt. The larger the footprint, the more dirt or sand is displaced. With the Ecological Footprint concept, the more we consume and throw out, the more natural resources we use- and our symbolic Ecological Footprint grows. The Ecological Footprint estimates how much productive land and water you need to support what you use and what you throw away. Ecological Footprints can be calculated for individuals like you, communities, and even countries. We use natural resources when we consume, pollute, and discard trash.

5. What are some things you could do to decrease your ecological footprint?

Answer: Eat more fresh produce and less foods that come in a package that needs to be thrown away, 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.

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

Optional Enrichment Idea

Invite a local farmer into your classroom for a visit. Encourage the farmer to share information about how the weather and climate in the area influence farming. Take lots of pictures throughout the event to make a special book for the class library. Students can write or dictate their thoughts as captions for the pictures.