

FOOD MILES ACTIVITIES



These activities are designed for your SNAG to learn about food miles and what their own 'food print' might be. This is to encourage the group to become more aware of food citizenship and have a deeper understanding between climate change and the food we buy to eat. The activities can be done together, or you can pick and choose the activities best suited to the group. We recommend reading the Food Miles Explained document before you start to give you some background information.

This activity would help evidence criteria;

B2.0 Our School Nutrition Action Group has led a review of food culture in our school, and actions have been agreed

B3.0 We use the topic of healthy and sustainable food as a theme for assemblies

S3.3 Our pupils explore the ethical and environmental issues around food choices and this is linked to changes in our school meals

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To understand where food has travelled from
- To understand how food has travelled and the impacts of this
- How to choose more sustainable food that is good for the planet

YOU WILL NEED:

- Food products from different countries
- A map or globe
- String
- Laptop

Other FFL resources this activity links to (see Appendix): Transport Pictures, Environmental Impact Illustrations, Food Print, Food Miles Explained.

This resource also links to:

[The story of a banana \(Oxfam Education\)](#)

- **Remind** students the process of getting food from farm to fork.

[The story of a banana \(Oxfam Education\)](#)

<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/go-bananas>

- **Discuss** what food miles are with the students. You can refer to the Food Miles Explained document.

How far has your food travelled?

Using a map and a piece of string ask what food would have travelled further (which string is longer?)

e.g. A tomato from Spain or an avocado from South Africa



HOW FAR HAS YOUR FOOD TRAVELLED?

- **Discuss** how a food product might have been transported (e.g. plane / ship / lorry). Use our Transport Pictures (see appendix) to help you.
- **Discuss** the reasons why food is transported so far:
 - Some climates are suitable for certain crops such as bananas and coffee.
 - Refrigeration, preservatives and fast transportation all mean that foods can survive long journeys.
 - Heated greenhouses and other intensive methods enable countries to grow crops out of season, for example we can grow strawberries all year round in the UK.
 - Supermarkets say people want to have access to all kinds of foods all year round, for example strawberries in the winter.
- **What do children think about the fact that we import foods that we can produce ourselves?** For example, for every pint of milk we export, we import approximately two pints.

But heated greenhouses use a lot of energy!

IMPACTS OF TRANSPORTATION

Pupils need to understand that transporting food over great distances creates a great deal of pollution, and that is one of the key problems with the global trade in food.

- Use the Environmental Impact Illustrations and the Transport images (see appendix) to match the impacts to the different modes of transport: e.g. congestion – lorry, water pollution – ship
- **Ask other leading questions:** Are there any impacts that would go with 2 or all 3 modes of transport e.g. air pollution? Discuss why. Does noise pollution only affect us?
- **Watch** our 'Eating to save the planet' video on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyoxVwAIX_M):
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyoxVwAIX_M
- **Mind map:** Explore how to reduce food miles using a mind map



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Food Print

Using our resource, each child picks a food product and fills in their 'food print'. Alternatively, pupils could produce posters to promote other ways of shopping. These can then be displayed in the dining room.

Sharing with the school

Think about how you might want to share what you have learnt with the rest of the school to raise awareness. You could:

- Hold an assembly
- Celebrate World Food Day / Fairtrade Fortnight for sustainability
- Plan for a whole school project, looking at sourcing food locally and sustainably



APPENDIX



TRANSPORT PICTURES



TRANSPORT PICTURES



TRANSPORT PICTURES



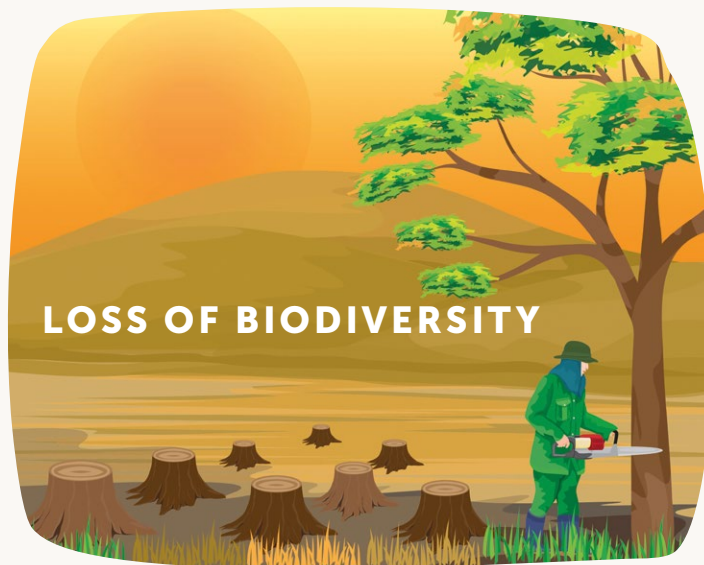
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ILLUSTRATIONS



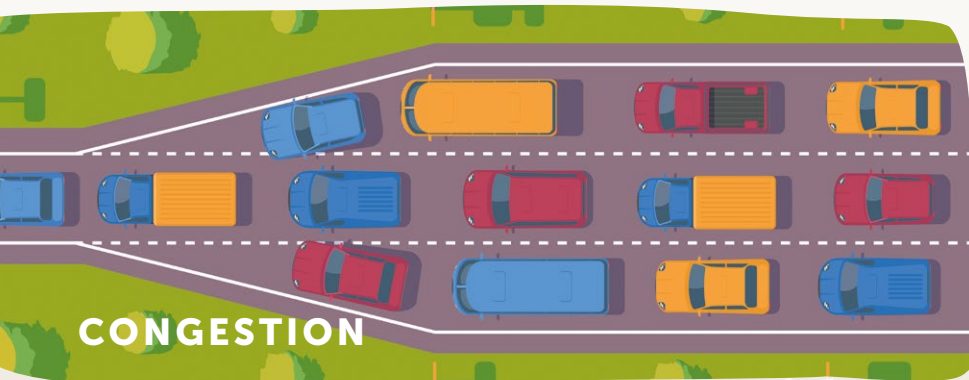
**HEALTH
PROBLEMS**
(E.G. ASTHMA)



NOISE POLLUTION



LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY



CONGESTION



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ILLUSTRATIONS



WATER POLLUTION



ACCIDENTS



AIR POLLUTION

**USING UP
FOSSIL FUELS**



FOOD PRINT



WHAT IS YOUR FOOD'S FOOD PRINT?

Choose any food item, it could be your favourite food, one you have every day or simply one that you want to find out more about. Then answer these questions to find out how climate friendly your food is.

Draw your item



What is your item?

Where has it come from?

Tell us the country/area

How far has it come in
kilometres?

How do you think it
travelled here?

Do you think this item is
climate friendly? If not, what
could be an alternative?

FOOD MILES EXPLAINED



WHAT ARE FOOD MILES?

The total **distance** food has travelled to get from where it was produced to where it is sold. Simply put – the transportation of food.

WHAT IS A CARBON FOOTPRINT?

The **amount** of CO2 emitted as a result of the production and transportation of a product.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Many of the foods we eat are either grown or produced in other countries. They are transported by plane, train, boat and lorry to reach the UK. This causes pollution and carbon dioxide to be released into the atmosphere, contributing to **climate change**.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE SPEED OUR PLANET IS HEATING UP.

Impacts of climate change:

- environmental impacts: pollution, increase disposable waste
- increased transport costs
- food quality and nutritional value
- food insecurity
- lower wages



QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- **Where does our food come from?**
- **Who produces our food and how?**
- **What are living conditions like for the people who produce our food?**
- **How far has our food travelled?**
- **Is there a more local alternative?**



What we grow, buy, and eat can have an impact on climate change. The food system in the UK contributes around 20% to UK human made CO2 emissions.

If we want to reduce the impact that our actions are having on our climate change, eating food that is grown locally is one of the best ways to do this.

There are examples of ways we can help to reduce food miles in the Food Miles Activities resource.

