

ABOUT THE UNIT

This is a 'short' unit. It shows how a farm can be used to develop children's understanding about where food comes from relating to healthy eating and diet. It can be successfully linked to other areas of work, ideally with the adapted Geography Unit 3 'The Farm' and link to other growing and cooking activities in school.

This unit could also be used as a 'continuous' unit over a longer period of time, especially supporting other work around issues of sustainability regarding local food, waste and recycling and environmental care.

For more able pupils, some activities focusing around seasonal and local foods are suggested.

A visit to a countryside-based farm would greatly benefit the use of this unit. See website www.face-online.org.uk resources section for suggested farms to visit. For the healthy eating elements, a farm where fruit and vegetables are available is ideal, but other farms i.e. arable farms and farms with animals/livestock may be used with adaptations to the scheme. Some farmers may be able to visit the school to talk to children about where food comes from.

Developing confidence and responsibility

Recognise what they like and dislike
Consider what is right and wrong, fair and unfair
Share opinions on things that matter to them

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

To take part in simple discussions
To take part in a simple debate on a topical issue
To realise that people and other living things have needs and that they have responsibilities to meet them

Developing a healthy safer lifestyle

How to make simple choices that improve their health and well-being

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

To listen to other people, and play and work cooperatively

To identify and respect the differences and similarities between people

VOCABULARY

In this unit, children are likely to use:

- farm, field, tractor, weather, barn, farmyard, hedgerow, boundary, farmer, local, regional, balanced diet, sugar, fatty foods, fruit, vegetables (as well as individual names of fruits and vegetables), 5 a day, eatwell plate.

RESOURCES

- fiction books about farms
- books on fruits and vegetables
- seasonal fruits and vegetables
- pictures and photographs of farms
- paints, crayons or materials for making a picture/collage
- 5 A DAY website www.5aday.nhs.uk
- Food Standards Agency Eatwell website www.eatwell.org.uk/healthydiet/eatwellplate/

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have:

- studied their local environment to develop an understanding of local identity and places in the local area
- developed the skills of using photographs and maps
- explored environmental issues such as the need to reduce waste, eat healthily and the benefits of fresh, locally produced food

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will:

Have seen and be able to name foods they have seen produced on a farm.

Recognise fruits and vegetables and understand they are an important part of a healthy diet. Be informed and able to make healthy choices about what they eat.

Understand what the five a day message is about and the concept of a balanced diet.

some children will not have made so much progress and will:

Know the names of some fruits and vegetables and that they should eat more of these and know that food is grown or comes from farms.

some children will have progressed further and will also:

Be able to name some local and regional place names and have better knowledge of how food is grown or produced. Be able to describe the Eatwell Plate in more detail.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES	POINTS TO NOTE
CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN		CHILDREN	
What sorts of food are grown on the farm?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are many foods that farmers produce • where food comes from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a farm visit, show the children the different plants that are available, e.g. wheat, barley, potatoes, esp. fruits and vegetables. Ask the children to make a list of the fruits and vegetables they have heard of. If possible give children opportunity to pick some fruit and veg and taste (NB tasting activities carry health and safety considerations). • In the classroom, run a vegetable quiz to see which fruits and vegetables the children recognize. Include some that are unusual, some that are seasonal and some that are not grown locally or in the UK. This can be done on the farm. Do they know what is growing here? With a root crop like potato or carrot, you can ask the children if they can guess what is growing attached to these leaves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise and understand where food comes from • recognise fruit and vegetables in their unprocessed form • identify the parts of food plants we eat and the parts we do not eat. 	

What sorts of food are good for me?

- that all foods are acceptable as part of a healthy balanced diet
- that a healthy diet should contain fruit and vegetables in a proportion of a third of the whole
- Discuss with the children what they like about food, and how food that is raw can be made tasty by cooking it a certain way, e.g. raw sprouts are not so nice, but when steamed, taste great! What foods don't need cooking? (e.g. apples, lettuce) Which do? (meat, potato) Explain many can be eaten cooked or uncooked. What foods would they miss most if they couldn't eat them ever again and which foods have they tried that they didn't enjoy?
- Encourage the children to express personal preferences, but explain that our bodies are designed to run well on particular types of food and too much of certain kinds e.g. sugary, fatty can lead to health problems as we grow up.
- If there are animals on the farm, ask the farmer to explain how he looks after these and see the food that they eat to keep them healthy. Give the children chance to find out about the five freedoms (see RSPCA resources and Soil Association Food for Life) and make the link e.g. between beef from cattle etc. Explain to children why eating meat as part of a balanced diet is acceptable, but that a healthy diet should have more of other food groups.
- use reasoned arguments and discussion to make an informed personal choice about what they eat
- know that fruit and vegetable should form one third of their diet

For some, meat eating may be a sensitive subject. The difference between animals for pets and animals that would have no life at all if they weren't raised for humans to eat should be highlighted. Discussion and linked work on food chains can help children to understand. Most farmers should be able to explain how they care very much for their animals even though they are destined to be part of food supply chain. Children should also understand and respect the views of those who choose not to eat meat, e.g. vegetarians.

Stress the importance of slow release carbohydrate e.g. bread, cereals in diet as well as fruit and vegetables. Try to emphasise good (i.e. balanced) and bad diets rather than good and bad foods.

What sorts of food are good for me?

- What is a balanced diet?
- How do we persuade people to eat more fruit and vegetables?
- Introduce the children to the *Eatwell Plate* and explain the idea of a balanced diet with most of our food being fruit and veg and carbohydrate groups and proportionally less from the other groups. Using a plate and cut out foods make up some meals and ask the children if they think the meal is a healthy one.
- Ask the children if they have heard of the 5 a day message. Explain to the children that a portion of fruit and vegetables is the amount that can be held in the palm of one's hand. Explain that many people including adults do not eat enough fruit and vegetables and often too much of other types of food. Ask the children what might this do to their bodies. Stress the health risks as well as the obvious 'being fat' answer. Include ideas of taking exercise too and explain the concept of 'energy in – energy out', and how a balance between the two is important. After discussion, ask the children to design and create a poster encouraging people to eat more fruit and vegetables.
- To recognise a variety of healthy fruits and vegetables
- In the classroom, have a tasting session of fruits and vegetables. Get the children to name and sort the vegetables and fruits according to their colours.
- Have the children draw or paint a rainbow. Using rainbow colours ask the children to draw a rainbow of fruits and vegetables that they could eat.

www.eatwell.gov.uk/healthydiet/eatwellplate

The British Nutrition Foundation *Food a fact of life* resources are really useful.

It is sometimes difficult to balance every meal; importantly try and help children understand that the balance can be achieved over a day or even over a period of a week, for example eating a burger and chips occasionally can still be part of a healthy diet but balance needs to be achieved.

What is local food?

- What is meant by local and regional food
- That they have choices about where they buy their food and the type of food they choose to eat
- Using simple maps and atlases talk to the children about where they live. Ask if anybody has ever lived anywhere else or visited other places. Using a map and globe, talk about places children know and introduce the idea of what local means. Places children know can be pinned on a regional map and other places of note e.g. county towns, added dependent on ability of the group.
Explain that the food we eat that has been grown near to us is sometimes called local or regional food. Other food from further away in the UK could be called national or British food, whilst some is from further away/overseas. Using food labels from different places in the region, UK and overseas, help children to sort them into three groups. Get the children to write the months of the year on paper. Discuss where the seasons coincide with the months. Using pictures of fruit and veg get children to guess when they are available e.g. strawberries in summer, apples from autumn. Sort the fruits and vegetables into the seasons when they are growing in the UK. Explain that some foods appear to be available all the time because they are stored or grown under glass/polytunnel or commonly brought from other countries where the seasons are different to ours.

It would be useful to introduce the idea of local regions, e.g. West Midlands being made up of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Hereford, Worcestershire and Warwickshire and the more urban areas, main towns and cities. Geography link.

A downloadable pack which comprises activities for KS2 children which can be carried out in the classroom, on the farm or as preparation or follow-up to a farm visit. They are flexible ways of encouraging young people to think more carefully about where our food comes from.

Opportunity to discuss in simple ways food miles and sustainable issues, including using oil, petrol and packaging materials. Also supporting local economy by purchasing locally/regionally when possible.

The 'Why Farming Matters' pack from FACE contains an activity which gives opportunity to discuss seasonal food, and food miles, which may be appropriate with older children or could be adapted for younger children.

Information on seasonality can be found in gardening books or from the Healthy Living section of the FACE web site.

Some food says 'Produced in the UK' but it is hard to know where the ingredients come from or even where the product was manufactured. You may wish to talk about this with children to see if they think that is fair or unfair and explore the reasons why manufacturers don't tell us.