

Classroom

V I D E O

TEACHER'S NOTES

Because Food Matters

Local or Imported Food – How to Decide

Duration: 30 minutes

Classroom Video Ltd.

Tel: 0117 929 1924

Fax: 0117 930 4345

Email: orders@classroomvideo.co.uk

www.classroomvideo.co.uk

For Teachers

Brief Summary of Programme

This programme examines a question that affects us all – should we buy food that is imported or should we just buy food grown in the UK? The DVD looks at how self-sufficient the UK is in food production and some of the reasons why we import food, particularly from tropical countries. It looks briefly at how the economies of some LEDCs depend on exporting food to richer western countries. The film discusses in some detail the important concepts of 'food miles', food 'carbon footprints' and 'food security'. Finally it looks at the question from the perspective of different people – farmers, the supermarkets and a range of consumers and experts.

Curriculum Links

1. **Geography** – the programme has direct relevance to all three key stages in geography. Most exam specifications contain a section which looks at the benefits and challenges of producing food for a growing UK population and the need to import food from other countries. Key geographical concepts such as 'food miles', food 'carbon footprint' and 'food security' are a major focus. Specifications will also have a section on 'interdependence' looking at the relationship between the UK and a range of LEDCs at different stages of development.
2. **Science** - the DVD provides a useful starting point for looking at the benefits of food produced locally versus food which has travelled long distances. Discussions relating to food quality and nutrition could follow on from watching the DVD.
3. **PSHE and Citizenship** – there is much to analyse and debate in this DVD as it illustrates one of the key topical questions in the UK – do we try to produce all our own food and ignore the farmers in poorer countries whose livelihood and quality of life depends on exporting food to richer MEDCs? There are also important global issues discussed in the DVD relating to 'carbon footprints' and 'global warming'.
4. **Design and Technology** - there are a number of opportunities to link design and technology work into this DVD by looking at the transport and storage of food and the impact of changes in technology.
5. In **History**, there are some links in the DVD to the process of colonialism and how countries particularly in the African continent have become dependent on the UK and other western countries for the export of agricultural products.

DVD Timeline

00:00:00	Introduction
00:0:42	Where does our food come from?
00:5:45	What are food miles and why are they important?
00:11:50	What is our food carbon footprint?
00:16:45	What is food security and can it be guaranteed?
00:20:40	Making a decision
00:25:00	Conclusion and credits
00:26:20	Programme end

Useful Web Resources

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/index.htm>

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/factsheets/food_farming.pdf

<http://www.soilassociation.org/foodandfarming>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/food_matters/foodmiles.shtml

<http://www.climatechoices.org.uk/pages/food3.htm>

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/gr/foodmiles/facts.html>

<https://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/reports/foodsecurity/foodsecurity.doc>

<http://uk.oneworld.net/guides/food>

Related DVDs available from Classroom Video Ltd.

From the *Because Food Matters* series:

DVD 1 – *Does It Matter How Our Food is Produced?*

DVD 3 – *Fairtrade – Who Benefits?*

Please contact customer services on 0117 929 1924
or visit www.classroomvideo.co.uk to see our full range of titles.

Student Worksheet

While Viewing the Programme

1. About what **percentage** of food on sale in UK shops comes from other countries?

2. According to the statistics, what has happened to the amount of food that we **import** over the last ten years?

3. Name **five** foods that are commonly grown in the **UK**?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

4. What effect does the **low cost of farm labour** in **LEDCs** have on food imports?

5. What effect has the large number of recent animal epidemics such as '**foot and mouth**' disease had on the ability of the UK to produce food?

6. However efficient UK farmers are, we will always have to **import** some food types. Why?

7. If we go to a supermarket and buy the ingredients to make spaghetti bolognese, **how far** in total have the food items likely to have travelled if most of the ingredients are imported?

Because Food Matters
Local or Imported Food – How to Decide

8. Why do some people believe that it is very important that we continue to **import** food from the **LEDC** countries such as Kenya, Brazil and India?

9. When we buy food from other countries, what is the effect on the **nutritional** value of the imported food?

10. Which method of food transport has the **worse effect** on the environment in terms of the amount of **CO₂** emissions?

11. In some developing countries **land has been cleared** to make space for growing more crops and rearing more animals. Why might this be a bad thing?

12. If we buy an **imported apple** from New Zealand in February, why might it be better than buying an **English apple**?

13. Food that has travelled long distances has to have lots of protective **packaging**. Why is this sometimes a bad thing?

14. What is '**food security**'?

Because Food Matters
Local or Imported Food – How to Decide

15. What effects do natural disasters, rising oil prices and growing more biofuels have on the **world price** of food items?

After Viewing the Programme

The programme raises many different general questions which can be followed up afterwards. These include:

- a) Why has the amount of food that we import varied over the years?
- b) Why should we be concerned about the livelihoods of farmers in other countries?
- c) What choices do we have as consumers when buying our food?
- d) How do the choices we make affect issues such as global warming?
- e) Is food security in the UK a serious issue compared to food security in the LEDCs?

Suggested Student Responses

1. About what **percentage** of food on sale in UK shops comes from other countries?

About 50% of the food in the shops is imported.

2. According to the statistics, what has happened to the amount of food that we **import** over the last ten years?

The amount of all food products imported has risen substantially in the last ten years.

3. Name **five** foods that are commonly grown in the **UK**?

Commonly grown foods mentioned in the video include: wheat, barley, oats, oil seed rape, peas, beans, potatoes, strawberries, cherries and raspberries.

4. What effect does the **low cost of farm labour** in **LEDCs** have on food imports?

Low labour costs in the LEDCs means that they can produce food more cheaply than we can in this country so it is cheaper to import this food rather than buy it from UK farms.

5. What effect has the large number of recent animal epidemics such as '**foot and mouth**' disease had on the ability of the UK to produce food?

The large number of recent animal epidemics has resulted in many animal farms going out of business making it more difficult to buy animal products reared in the UK.

6. However efficient UK farmers are, we will always have to **import** some food types. Why?

The climate in the UK is warm and wet in summer, cool and wet in winter. Some crops such as oranges and pineapples require a hot tropical climate so it is not possible to grow them in the UK.

7. If we go to a supermarket and buy the ingredients to make spaghetti bolognaise, **how far** in total have the food items likely to have travelled if most of the ingredients are imported?

The food items might have travelled as much as 9000 miles in total!

8. Why do some people believe that it is very important that we continue to **import** food from the **LEDC** countries such as Kenya, Brazil and India?

Farmers in LEDC countries depend on exporting their farm products to countries such as the UK. If we stop buying their products their livelihood and standard of living may be at risk.

Because Food Matters
Local or Imported Food – How to Decide

9. When we buy food from other countries, what is the effect on the **nutritional** value of the imported food?

The longer it takes to get the food from where it is grown to where it is eaten, the more nutrients are lost. Local food grown in the UK will therefore normally be more nutritious.

10. Which method of food transport has the **worse effect** on the environment in terms of the amount of **CO₂** emissions?

*Air travel causes the most problems. Although only 1% of our imported food travels by plane, air travel is responsible for 11% of food transport **CO₂** emissions.*

11. In some developing countries **land has been cleared** to make space for growing more crops and rearing more animals. Why might this be a bad thing?

Some of the land that has been cleared is valuable wildlife habitats such as rainforest. When the rainforest is destroyed, the wildlife habitats are destroyed and the indigenous population may lose their homes and their land.

12. If we buy an **imported apple** from New Zealand in February, why might it be better than buying an **English apple**?

English apples are picked in the autumn and then sold fresh or put into cold storage. The machines that keep the apples cool give out CO₂. An English apple purchased out of season may therefore be responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than an apple imported all the way from New Zealand.

13. Food that has travelled long distances has to have lots of protective **packaging**. Why is this sometimes a bad thing?

It takes energy to manufacture packaging and much of the food packaging is simply thrown away rather than being recycled so it is inefficient use of our valuable resources.

14. What is '**food security**'?

Food security is all about having a guaranteed supply of suitable food both on a national and on an individual basis.

15. What effects do natural disasters, rising oil prices and growing more biofuels have on the **world price** of food items?

All of these things cause problems in various parts of the world and can lead to dramatic increases in the price of some food products (as happened in 2008 with basic foodstuffs such rice, wheat, etc).