

# FOOD, inc.

A Third Level Creative Inquiry



## Introduction

*'You can change the world with every bite'*

The film FOOD, INC. allows the audience to consider how food in our modern world is produced and how this production is affecting our health, farmers' and workers' rights, animal welfare and the environment as a whole.

Your Food on Film screening will allow time for thought and reflection for individuals on their own food choices and also serve as an opportunity for group discussions on the social, environmental and moral implications of food production and consumption. Raising awareness and asking questions are key to making informed choices about what we consume.

It is important to offer the audience some ways to talk about what they have seen and heard. It is not necessary to know the subject in depth to host a conversation. Here are some informal and fun ways to get the conversation going.

## The Screening

The way you choose to show the film will depend on the size, time restraints and age of the audience. Suggested lines of inquiry have

been split into the nine sections of the film. These can be presented on a sheet for individuals to reflect upon as they watch the film and then used as a basis for group discussions at the end **or** the film could be stopped after each chapter and discussions could take place throughout the showing of the film as best suits the audience. The idea is that this is a flexible resource that can be adapted and used as suits your audiences' needs.

### **Before the film – Wee chats**

Here are four ideas to use at the start of your screening to encourage an atmosphere conducive to relaxed discussions at your event.

#### **1) Food for Thought**

Put a question on each seat to be discussed with shoulder partner. Some possible questions are;

‘What did you have for dinner last night?’

‘What is your favourite meal?’

‘What is/was your parents/carers favourite meal?’

‘What and when was the last meal you made for yourself?’

‘What are your happiest food memories?’

‘Do any food smells remind you of a certain period in your life?’

#### **2)Pensive Popcorn!**

Similar to above but big tub/tubs of paper popcorn (scrunched up paper) with statements/points for discussion that can be passed around the audience.

### 3) Mapping activity

Have a large map either on a big screen or on the floor in the same room as the screening. Place post it notes on chairs and on the screen have the question, 'What did you eat for dinner last night?'

People then write what they ate on post it notes and stick on the map where they think the product was produced. This creates an easy visual display of food miles.

### 4) Sustainable Development Goals Activity

One way to introduce the issues raised in the film is to look at the Sustainable Development Goals and invite the audience to discuss which goals are addressed in the film and ways in which they can be overcome.

Pictures of all the [17 SDGs](#) placed on chairs. Audience do a before and after discussion about goals that they think will be/were addressed in the film. Any surprises? Points for discussion?

### **Before/during/after the film**

#### **Lines of Inquiry (for the 9 sections of the film)**

##### Fast Food To All Food

(12:52 minutes)

- How often in the last month have you had food from a fast food restaurant?

- Why do you choose fast food –taste, speed, cost, seasonality, peer pressure?
- Do you think about how your food is produced?
- Richard Lobb of the National Chicken Council states “In a way we’re not producing chickens, we’re producing food.” Discuss
- Should all animals have the same rights?
- Should all farmers have the right to decide how they keep their animals?

### A Cornucopia of Choices

(7:54 minutes)

- Reflect on the use of corn in the foods we eat. Brainstorm the products that contain corn? How did you feel about this?
- What does food choice mean to you?
- Can you think of any problems in relying on just a few crops?
- Is it your responsibility to know what is in your food or the responsibility of other agencies?
- Analyse your next meal to ascertain how many of your foods contain products made from corn. There’s a list of corn derived products in Appendix A

(This section shows a cow with a hole, or passageway, in its side called a fistula. The fistula connects the cow’s stomach to the outside and is created to allow researchers to observe the digestibility of foods in cattle.)

### Unintended Consequences

(13:56 minutes)

- Can you remember any recent food scares? What have been the consequences and impact of these scares? What caused them?

- E. coli –Kevin’s mother says “Sometimes it feels like the industry was more protected than my son” Discuss.
- Are we right to assume our food is safe?
- Is feeding cattle on corn a good idea?

## The Dollar Menu

(5:13 minutes)

- Does income affect what we eat?
- What are the health implications of eating cheap processed food?
- Whose job is it to educate about healthy food choices?
- How is fast food subsidized? Who does this benefit and what are the costs?
- Whose responsibility is it to ensure healthy food is accessible to all?

## In The Grass

(13:44 minutes)

This section shows footage of chickens getting killed and images of slaughterhouses that some audiences might find difficult to watch. You may want to alert your audience and/or provide another option.

- Eduardo Pena says “We want to pay the cheapest price for our food. We don’t understand that it comes at a price” What is the true price that we are paying for cheap food?
- Are workers’ rights being respected in the film? What can we, as individuals do about it?
- Author Michael Pollan says “Vote with your fork” to bring about change. Discuss

## Hidden Costs

(8:00 minutes)

- Does it matter to you who produces your food?
- Can you think of the effect on your food if small companies (like the yoghurt company in the film) are bought over by big companies?
- Is cost the most important thing for our food industry? Is it the most important thing for you? What about the environmental costs of 'cheap' products?
- Why are there more organic products in the large supermarkets than there were five years ago? Do you believe the supermarkets have had 'moral enlightenment'?
- Do you believe you can influence supermarkets by making environmentally and ethically sound food choices?

## From Seed to Supermarket

(10:07 minutes)

- Should food labelling clearly show any genetically modified products and ingredients?
- How do you feel about eating genetically modified crops?
- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of a company owning the patent for a seed?
- Should a business dictate what an independent farmer can and cannot do on his own land?

## The Veil

(7:59 minutes)

- When was the last time you read a label on food you were about to consume?

- Would information on a label put you off eating certain products? Why?
- Do you really want to know what is in your food or are you happy to remain unaware?
- Whose job should it be to regulate food labels?
- Can we ever be sure the food we are eating is what we think it is?
- Is it possible to have a diet where we know exactly what we are eating?

### Shocks to the System

(7:08 minutes)

- Can we as individual consumers make a difference to how the world consumes food?
- Have you tried to take control of your food choices? How? What are the positive impacts of your choices?
- It is too expensive for most to eat well and ethically in Scotland today. Discuss.
- How can we encourage people to think more about the food they consume?
- Do you actively support local, environmentally and ethically sound food producers in Scotland? What difference does this make?

## **After the film - Reflection**

Here are some questions you can use after your screening to encourage your audience to reflect on what they have seen and heard.

Has 'FOOD, INC'. changed the way you think about food?

Did anything in the film surprise you?

How often have you taken time to reflect on your food choices?

Is food production something you discuss with your family and friends?

What is the most significant thing you have learnt through exploring issues in 'FOOD INC.'?

Are there any issues highlighted in the film that you would like to explore further?

Do you feel confident expressing your own opinions about food?

Will you be making any changes to your own diet as a result of what you have seen? Are you going to 'vote with your fork'?

Did you work well with your team in the challenge? (for schools, as below)

## **Key Challenge**

Identify how issues raised in FOOD, INC. link in to the Sustainable Development goals and devise a plan of action that can help to address them.

OR

Create a three course menu using locally and ethically sourced ingredients. You could make and taste some of these dishes at a One Planet Picnic.

Through exploration of the key issues in FOOD, INC. pupils will be enlightened and empowered allowing them to make informed decisions about their own food choices and create a menu reflecting what they have learnt.

## **Key Learning Focus**

**To explore the ethical, environmental and moral issues surrounding food and food systems in the world today.**

Learners will-

- Evaluate the role of agriculture and different food production systems in the production of food and raw material and draw reasoned conclusions about the environmental impacts and sustainability of food production.
- Reflect on influences on the consumer and be able to contribute to discussions on how consumers can be influenced by external sources.
- Critically analyse sources of evidence presented to inform own opinion

- Develop an awareness of the journeys which foods make from source to consumer, their seasonality, their local availability and their sustainability.

### **Taking Learning Further**

- Host a hungry for change One Planet Picnic
- Explore marketing of foods and how this influences what we consume.
- Exploitation of workers. How do you know if your food was produced by workers protected by employment legislation?
- Different ways of shopping are emerging for example, farmer's markets, and online hubs that align consumers with producers. Why are people shopping this way?

### **Looking Out For Learning**

#### Head

I can understand how food is produced in Scotland.

I know where the food I eat comes from.

I understand that consumers can be influenced by external factors.

I have explored food production in different countries and can make an informed opinion on what I have learnt.

I understand what is meant by genetically modified food and how this is different to the processes of hybridisation.

#### Heart

I can make informed choices about what I eat.

I know the benefits of eating food that does not damage the environment, my own health or people and places elsewhere.

I try to make food choices that will not adversely affect others.

### Hands

I can source and cook with local and seasonal food.

I can grow different types of food plants.

I can contribute to discussions about food production in the UK and the wider world.

I can support local farmers and food producers in the way I plan and consume food.

## **CfE Experiences and Outcomes**

When preparing and cooking a variety of foods, I am aware of the journeys which foods make from source to consumer, their seasonality, their local availability and their sustainability. HWB1-35a/HWB 2-35a

Having explored a range of issues which may affect food choice, I can discuss how this could impact on the individual's health. HWB3-34a/HWB 4-34a

Having investigated the effects of food processing on the nutritional value of foods, I can critically assess the place of processed foods in a healthy balanced diet. HWB 4-35a

By investigating different influences on the consumer, I can discuss how consumers can be influenced by external sources. HWB 4-37a

I can apply my developing understanding of morality to consider a range of moral dilemmas in order to find ways which could promote a more just and compassionate society. RME 4-05 b

I can apply philosophical enquiry to explore questions or ethical issues. RME 4-09e

Having selected scientific themes of topical interest, I can critically analyse issues, and use relevant information to develop an informed argument. SCN 4-20a

Having evaluated the role of agriculture in the production of food and raw materials, I can draw reasoned conclusions about the environmental impacts and sustainability. SOC 4-09a

### **Helpful previous experience/Prior Knowledge**

I can share my developing views about values such as fairness and equality and love, caring, sharing and human rights. RME 2-05b

When preparing and cooking a variety of foods, I am aware of the journeys which foods make from source to consumer, their seasonality, their local availability and their sustainability. HWB1-35a/HWB 2-35a

Through exploration and discussion, I can understand that food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance, culture and religion. HWB 2-34a

I can explain how the different beliefs that people have, including beliefs which are independent of religion, relate to their moral viewpoints and how this leads them to respond to moral issues. RME 3-09c

### **Resources**

FOOD, INC. –A film by Robert Kenner

Fast Food Nation- Eric Schlosser **ISBN-10:** 0141006870

The Omnivores Dilemma – Michael Pollan **ISBN-10:** 1408812185

Sustainable Development Goals <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

Resourceful cooking

<http://resourcefulcook.com/mealplans/browse/forone>

Seasonal Recipes

<http://www.foodnetwork.co.uk/recipe/scottish-seasonal-recipes-february-keyword.html?search=scottish-seasonal-recipes-february&section=recipes>

How our favourite foods are made

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05tymg8>

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## Appendix A

Ascorbic acid  
Baking powder  
Calcium stearate  
Caramel  
Cellulose  
Citric Acid  
Confectioner's sugar  
Corn flour  
Corn oil  
Cornstarch  
Corn syrup  
Dextrin  
Dextrose (glucose)  
Diglycerides  
Ethylene  
Ethyl acetate  
Ethyl lactate  
Fibersol-2  
Fructose  
Fumaric acid  
Gluten  
Golden syrup  
High fructose corn syrup (HFCS)  
Inositol  
Invert sugar  
Malt  
Maltodextrin  
Margarine  
Monoglycerides  
Monosodium glutamate (MSG)  
Polydextrose  
Saccharin  
Semolina  
Sorbic Acid  
Sorbitol  
Starch  
Sucrose  
Treacle  
Vanilla extract  
White vinegar  
Xanthan gum  
Xylitol