

Eating locally



Ages: 7+



Time: 40 mins

Purpose:

To introduce the concept of food miles and to think about locally grown food.

Youth work outcomes:

Outcome 6: Young people express their voice and demonstrate social commitment

Outcome 7: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Sustainable development goals:



How it works:

In person:

World map, pens/dot stickers, selection of food labels.

Online:

Interactive whiteboard functionality.

Description:

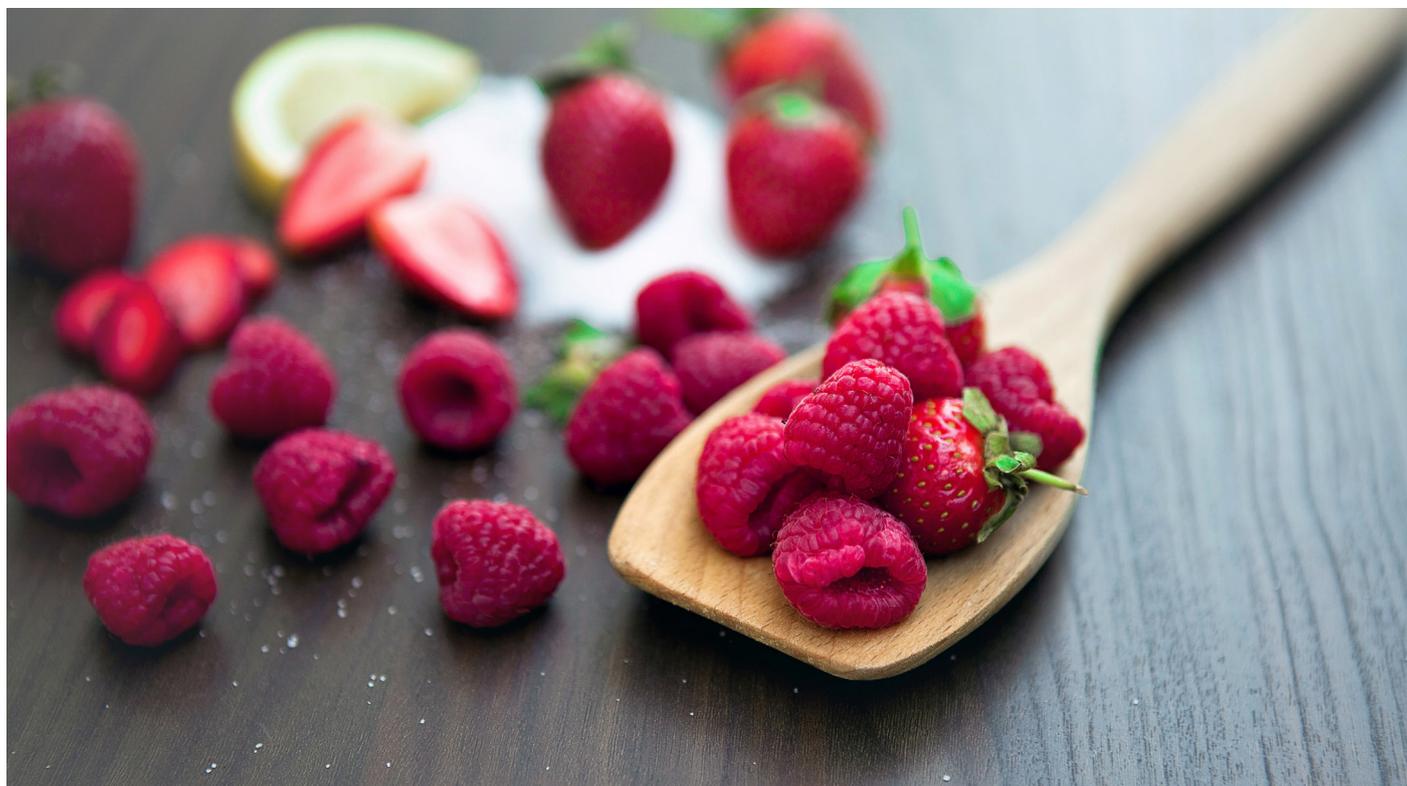
For this activity you need a collection of food labels or packaging. Youth workers can bring a selection or ask participants to bring a few each.

Start with a discussion about favourite foods and what we commonly eat. Where are the ingredients grown or the final product produced?

Now look at the food labels, particularly for country of origin or production. Using a map of the world, mark where the food comes from. How far has it come to get to your plate? Which food has come the farthest? Which food has travelled the least distance? Introduce the participants to the phrase 'food miles'. Food miles is the total distance food travels before it is sold. Brainstorm some different ways to reduce the food miles of the food we eat.

In small groups, ask participants to think of all the different stages food goes through before we eat it, e.g. planting, growing, picking, processing, cooking etc. They could use a variety of methods to present this like mind mapping or drawing.

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Discussion questions:

- Were you surprised by how far food travels before you eat it?
- What and who else do you think is involved in the process before it gets to your plate?
- What environmental impacts are there in the different stages?
- What food grows locally? Where is food grown in our community?
- What other aspects might you consider when making sustainable choices about food? (E.g. carbon footprint, organic, in season, food waste)
- What could we do as a group to address some of the problems discussed today?
- Do you think this information would change what foods people buy?
- Has this activity made you think about your own food choices?

Actions/next steps:

The Lunchboxes activity in this toolkit expands on this activity through discussion about the carbon footprint of food items.

Each local authority in Scotland is required by law to produce a food growing strategy. Check out the one for your area and see if there are ways for young people to be involved. There might even be a small space at your youth work setting to grow a few plants.

[Healthy n Happy](#) working in Rutherglen and Cambuslang have lots of tips and advice on growing your own vegetables, including step by step videos.