

A Global Fruit Salad

A mini lesson for grades 3-6

Adapted from BEAN lesson: "*The Power of Plants*"

Time required:

- 1 - 2 class periods

Materials:

- Large map of the world
- Highlighters
- Pushpins or tape
- Calculators
- "My Global Fruit Salad" worksheet (provided below)
- "How Far has my Fruit Travelled" worksheet (provided below)

Curriculum Connections:

Grade 3 – Understanding Life Systems, Growth and Change in Plants

3.7 Describe the different ways in which plants are grown for food, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of locally grown and organically produced food, including environmental benefits

Grade 3 – Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living

C1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of how the origins of food affect its nutritional value and environmental impact

C3.1 Explain how local fresh foods and foods from different cultures can be used to expand their range of healthy eating choices

Grade 4 – Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living

C3.1 Identify ways of promoting healthier food choices in a variety of settings and situations

Grade 6 – Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living

C3.1 Explain how healthy eating and active living work together to improve a person's general health and well-being and how the benefits of both can be promoted to others

Background:

Despite living in the province with Canada's most productive farmland, Ontario imports more food products per capita than any other province! In this lesson students will concoct a hypothetical fruit salad, calculate how far different fruits travel to get to our plates, and discuss the consequences of shipping food long distances.

Activity 1 - Calculating food miles

"Food miles" describes the distance travelled by our food. The average distance travelled by food has increased dramatically over the past fifty years. Waterloo Public Health calculated that the average distance traveled by 58 foods commonly eaten in the city of Waterloo is 4,497 km. These vast distances happen because we want seasonal produce year round, we want food as cheaply as possible, and we consume more processed food. Massive companies are able to source and import the cheapest food possible. If growing or processing food is cheaper in other countries, companies save money using foreign produce and workers even if the food must be shipped halfway around the world to reach our plates.

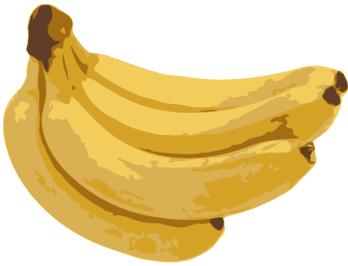
1. Discuss why fruits and vegetables are an important part of our diet. Ask: *Why is it important to eat fruits and vegetables? What nutrients do we get from them?*
2. Hand out the worksheet "My Global Fruit Salad". Students circle five fruits they would use to build their ideal fruit salad.
3. Make a list on the chalkboard with two categories "Can Grow in Ontario" and "Can Not Grow in Ontario." Students predict where each of the twenty fruits can be grown during the summer.
4. Hand out the "How Far has My Fruit Travelled?" worksheet. Students highlight the five fruits they selected and discover where each fruit was grown.
5. Attach a large map of the world on the wall. Students use pushpins or tape to attach pictures of each type of fruit onto the map to visualize how far away fruits must travel to reach our grocery stores.
6. Discuss the temperature/weather/climate in the countries now identified on the map.
7. Return to the "How Far has My Fruit Travelled?" worksheet. Students add up the total distance travelled by the five fruits in their salads to determine total food miles travelled. Enter this distance on the worksheet.

Reflection:

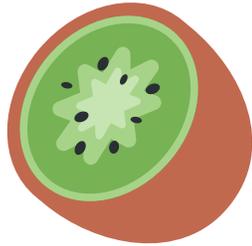
1. Discuss seasonality of produce. The distances in this activity reflect distances travelled by fruit in the summer. Ask: *Where does the grocery store get fruits and vegetables in the winter? Would the distance fruit travels be longer or shorter than in the summer? What sorts of fruits and vegetables could you eat in the winter if you only ate local produce?*
2. Discuss the impacts on the environment when humans transport food thousands of kilometers. Ask: *How is food shipped from one country to another? What are the impacts on the environment when food is shipped long distances? What pollutants do trucks and airplanes emit into the atmosphere? What impacts are increasing levels of carbon dioxide having on the Earth? How do we balance human needs and wants while protecting the environment in Canada and around the world?*

My Global Fruit Salad

Circle five fruits that you would use to make your perfect fruit salad.



Banana



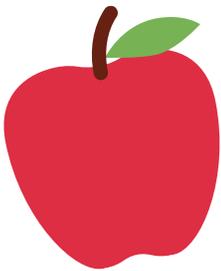
Kiwi



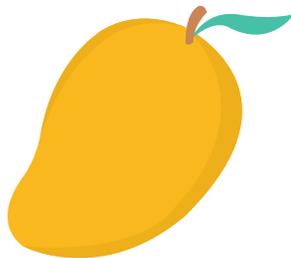
Strawberry



Grapes



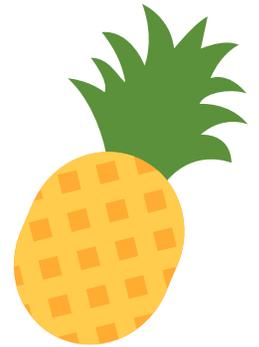
Apple



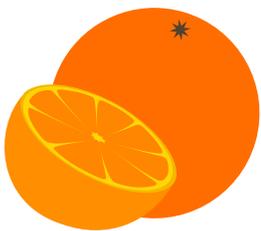
Mango



Blueberries



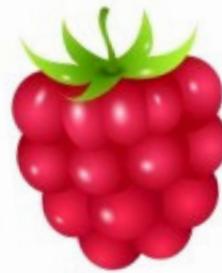
Pineapples



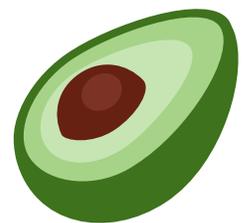
Orange



Peach



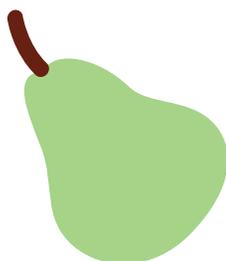
Raspberry



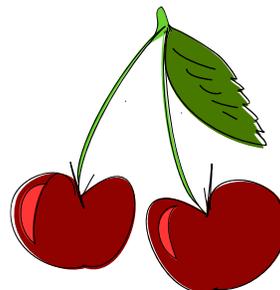
Avocado



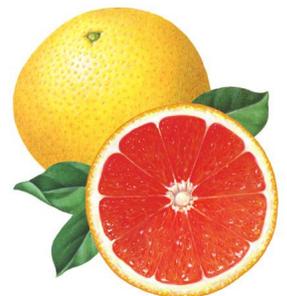
Coconut



Pear



Cherry



Grapefruit



How far has my fruit travelled?



Fruit	Country	Average Distance (km)
Banana	Ecuador	5,100
Strawberry	Ontario, Canada	100
Kiwi	New Zealand	14,500
Grapes	Ontario, Canada	100
Apple	Ontario, Canada	100
Mango	India	11,300
Blueberry	Ontario, Canada	100
Pineapple	Philippines	13,100
Orange	United States	3,300
Peach	Ontario, Canada	100
Raspberry	Ontario, Canada	100
Avocado	Mexico	3,600
Coconut	Philippines	3,300
Pear	Ontario, Canada	100
Cherry	Ontario, Canada	100
Grapefruit	United States	13,100

The distance travelled by our food is called food miles.
Add up the distance travelled by the fruit in your fruit salad.
How far did your fruit salad travel?