

The Biggest Reducer

Reduce Your "Food Miles":
Ideas to Help Our Planet

An Action Based Internet Project by Students
of the Environmental Neighbourhood Cluster

Environmental
Neighbourhood
Cluster

4 schools 1 planet

The Ice Breaker

- **Let's play Environmental Bingo!**

What are Food Miles?

- **Food Mile Facts [Australian Conservation Foundation]**

Put simply, 'food miles' is a measure of how far food travels – from paddock to plate – and is an indication of how environmentally-friendly it is. Food freight – especially by air and road – consumes fuel and energy, and releases greenhouse pollution, affecting the global climate.

- Generally speaking, the lower the food miles the better choice the product is for the environment.

What are Food Miles?

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- **Food Mile Facts [ACF]**

- * A recent German study found that a 240ml cup of yoghurt in a supermarket shelf in Berlin entails over 9,000km of transportation. (Germans eat three billion cups a year.)

- * In the United States, the food for a typical meal has travelled nearly 2,100km, but if that meal contains off-season fruits or vegetables the total distance is many times higher.

- * Even imported organic food can have a tremendous impact. A single Briton's shopping basket of 26 imported organic products could have travelled 241,000km and released as much CO₂ into the atmosphere as an average four bedroom household does through cooking meals over eight months.

Work before the session

- All students involved in the project to have had input from a lesson before attending the sessions.
- Each student to have collected information, images etc.
 - *their family's food consumption,
 - * the food miles involved
 - and
 - * some strategies to reduce these “food miles”

The Focus Questions

- Why are “food miles” an environmental issue?
- How can we easily assess the “food miles” of a weekly shopping list?
- What are some strategies we can use to reduce the “food miles” of a weekly shopping list?

The Thinking Task

- De Bono's Six Action Shoes

The Six Action Shoes allow you to think about an issue in order to choose or design a course of action.

The image of shoes implies action.

Shoes imply action for reaching a destination.

Image Analysis

- Look at a selected photo of a family from Peter Menzel's Hungry Planet.
- What do you think the food miles of each family would be?
- Is this excessive?
- Are there ways this could be reduced?
- What other issues are there?

The Six Action Shoes

- Navy Formal Shoes



Put on to take action which requires authority or rules or regulations to be established or adhered to. When action should follow set routines.

The Six Action Shoes

- Grey Sneakers



Put on for investigation and collection of information

The Six Action Shoes

- Brown Brogues



Put on to take practical action, that which seems sensible in the situation

The Six Action Shoes

- Orange Gumboots



Put on to take urgent action to avert a crisis or to deal with an emergency situation

The Six Action Shoes

- Pink Slippers



Put on to take caring or helping action in a situation where it is vital to consider and respect human feelings

The Six Action Shoes

- Purple Riding Boots



Put on to take “extraordinary”
action that is defined by the wearer of the
shoes

Teamwork

- Activity to discuss positive teamwork

The Task

- To create website for each school participating will contain home pages, podcasts, photos, blogs, movies, comics etc.
- The sites will provide readers with information on “food miles” patterns throughout the world, practical solutions to the reduction of “food miles”.

The Action Plans

- What are some different action plans we can use to reduce our “food miles” consumption?
- How can we evaluate those action plans, so that we can pick the most practical?
- How can households monitor their “food miles” consumption?

Reflection

- A digital video will be made during the unit to document the event and capture student reflections.
- Teachers from the schools involved will drop in to some of the sessions to discuss issues with students.

Credits

- Unit developed by

Mark Richardson & Kara Spence for the
Williamstown Environmental Cluster, 2009.