



Adding a Youth Flavor to Local Foods

Sensory Testing

Intended Audience:

- 8 year olds-18 year olds
- Adults who work with youth on food topics

Lesson Objectives:

Session participants will:

- Gain a basic understanding of local foods.
- Be exposed to local food products and have the opportunity to compare locally grown foods to non-locally grown food items.

Time: 45 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- Sensory Survey (each participant to have 1 survey for each food type; see attachment)
- Writing utensil: 1 per participant
- Four types of food items to test; need both local and non-local varieties
 - Consider growing season, availability, and audience when selecting foods
 - Consult “Sampling of Local Foods by Food Category” at the end of this lesson for ideas
- Napkins (1 for each food item)
- Serving dishes for each food item (1 for each food item)
- Serving utensils for each food item (toothpicks, tongs, spoons)
- Serving gloves for the facilitator to prepare food
- Signs (A, B) for each type of food
- Soap and water or hand sanitizer

Do Ahead:

- Review activity instructions.
- Gather equipment and supplies.
- Set up taste testing stations (see attachment).
- Have sensory surveys and writing utensils laid out by the stations.
- Prepare signs for each food item.

BACKGROUND

Sensory evaluation analyzes and measures human responses to the composition of food and drink for the purpose of evaluating consumer products; it enables producers to know what consumers like and why they have a preference of one item over another. For the purpose of this lesson, “local” means produced within the state of Ohio. Consult the “Introduction” PDF for other ways “local” may be defined.

WHAT TO DO

Activity:

- As a large group, ask participants to respond out loud to the following questions to gauge their knowledge on local foods. Reference the “Overview of Local Foods” at the beginning of this curriculum for answers to the questions below:
 - What are the benefits of purchasing food grown locally?
 - What are the challenges of purchasing food grown locally?
 - What kind of foods grow in our state?
 - Do you think there is a difference in appearance, smell, taste, and/or touch when food is locally grown compared to food grown far away? Why or why not?
 - No right or wrong answer.
- Split the group into four smaller groups of equal sizes. Assign each group to a taste testing station.
 1. Pass out a Sensory Survey handout and writing utensil to each participant. The handout includes 4 surveys on one document, one for each station.
 2. Youth will be comparing a local food item (Food A) to a non-local item (Food B) across the following categories:
 - Appearance (Which food looks more desirable to consume?)
 - Smell (Which food smells the most desirable?)
 - Taste (Which food tastes the most desirable?)
 - Touch (Which food feels the most desirable?)
 - Overall Preference (Which food item do you prefer and would you ultimately purchase?)
 3. Remind participants to:
 - Wash hands with soap and water before handling food.
 - Use a different serving dish/napkin for each food item.
 - Make sure the same serving utensil stays with the appropriate food item.



Sources:

- Raisin, R. (2010). *Local Food Does It Matter What You Eat?* Ohio State University Extension. Retrieved from: <http://www.ohio4h.org/selfdeterrmined>
- Locate a local farmer's market: <http://www.localharvest.org>
- Research Ohio products: <http://www.ohioproud.org/searchpartners.php>
- Learn more about local foods in Ohio: www.localfoods.osu.edu

Additional lessons in this series can be found online at:
<http://localfoods.osu.edu/adding-youth-flavor-extensions-signature-programs>

PREPARED BY

Hannah K. Epley, Extension Specialist
4-H Youth Development
OSU Extension, State 4-H Office
614-247-8144
epley.24@osu.edu

Dustin Homan, Volunteer
4-H Youth Development
homan.64@osu.edu

- Take your time when eating each sample to notice all of the categories of appearance, smell, taste, touch, and overall preference
4. Have groups rotate through each station repeating the first three steps outlined above and marking their preferences on the survey handout.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- Have participants vote for each choice across food items (jelly/fruit butter, jerky, potato chips, salsa) based on their overall preference choice.
 - Ask, "Who preferred food item A? Who preferred food item B? Why?"
 - Have participants share the specific ratings for each food item (appearance, smell, touch, taste).
- Reveal the brands for each food item.
- "Did you find there was a difference in appearance, smell, taste, and/or touch when food is locally grown compared to food grown far away? Why or why not?"
 - No right or wrong answer.
- "What are the benefits of taking your time to slow down and enjoy your food?"
 - Example answers: easier to identify the different characteristics of the food, prevent choking, prevents overeating, it is polite, etc.
- "In addition to the senses that you just experienced, like taste and smell and looks, what other factors do people use to choose if they will buy a food and/or eat a food?"
 - Examples answers: availability, cost, if other family members will eat the food, etc.
 - Reinforce that taste and enjoyment of a food is very important but it is one of many reasons why we choose and eat foods.
- "What are the benefits to purchasing local foods?"
 - Example answers: taste, support local economy, etc.
- "How can you encourage others to purchase local foods?"
- "What can we do in our local community to promote local foods?"

Apply:

- Encourage others to purchase local foods.
- Next time you go to the store, commit to purchasing \$10 worth of local foods.

Sampling of Local Foods by Food Category:

Fruit (all forms – fresh, frozen, canned and dried)	Vegetables (all forms – fresh, frozen, canned and dried)	
Apples Blackberries Blueberries Cantaloupe Currants Gooseberries Grapes (table) Peaches Red raspberries Black raspberries Purple raspberries Fall raspberries Rhubarb Strawberries Watermelon Paw Paw Apple sauce	Asparagus Lima Beans Pole beans Beans (snap and wax) Beets Broccoli Cabbage Carrots Cauliflower Collards Cucumbers Eggplant Endive Escarole Fennel Garlic Kale Leeks Leafy lettuce Mustard greens Okra Onions Green onions Parsnips	Peas Bell peppers Hot peppers Sweet peppers Potatoes Pumpkins Radishes Spinach Summer squash Winter squash Tomatoes Tomatillos Turnips Zucchini Bok choy Turnip greens Beet greens Edamame Celery Brussels sprouts Mushrooms Horseradish

Herbs	Sauces, Dressings and Condiments	Snacks
Cilantro Basil Parsley Dill Spice mixes Spice rub blends	Barbeque sauce Mustards (from sweet to hot) Salsas Tomato sauce Salad dressings Marinades	Potato chips Trail and snack mixes Corn chips Pretzels
Protein (fresh, frozen, canned, dried jerky, smoked, deli meats, sausages)	Sweets	Grains
Beef Pork Chicken Turkey Fish Eggs Duck Sheep Goats Bison Rabbit Ostrich Deer Nuts (walnuts, black walnuts) Sunflower seeds Veggie burgers	Honey Maple Syrup Ice Cream Sherbert Jelly Jams, Preserves, Marmalades, Conserves Fruit butters Fruit syrup Fruit leather	Corn (cornmeal) Wheat Buckwheat Oats Rye Barley Breads Pastas Tortillas Granola
Dried bean and peas	Baked goods	Edible flowers
Like pinto, black beans, black-eyed peas, etc.	Breads Bakery items like pies and cookies	Zucchini blossoms
Beverages	Specialty crops	Milk
Apple cider Grape juice and sparkling grape juice Teas Roasted coffee beans (coffee beans are often not grown locally) White, red, rose and fruit wine Beer	Ginger Hops Aronia berry Goji berry Roselle Belgian endive	Milk Cheese (include different kinds, especially Swiss Cheese) Cottage cheese Yogurt
Ready to eat and prepared foods	Vegetable oil	Pickled Products
Soups Prepared salads (pasta, potato, etc.)	Sunflower Canola Flax Soy	Pickles Relishes Chutneys