

Adding a Youth Flavor to Local Foods: Growing Community Involvement

List of Potential Activities to Conduct (activities provided in the *Local Food Does It Matter What You Eat?* idea starter found at: <http://www.ohio4h.org/selfdetermined>)

Use the planning template on the next page to plan out your activity.

- *Meal planning.* Incorporate at least two locally grown or produced foods into your family meals each week for one month.
- *Family food assessment.* Survey your family's eating habits. Make a list of the types of foods your family eats. Think about whether some of these foods can be purchased from local growers or producers. Discuss this during a meal with your family. What do they think?
- *Family food survey.* Review your family's food shopping habits.
 - Make a list of the stores where your family usually buys their food.
 - Are the stores owned locally or are they regional/national chains?
 - Why does your family choose to shop there?
 - Does your family ever shop at farmers' markets?
 - If not, what would make them stop and shop there?
 - Are you concerned with food safety? List four things that might cause concerns.
 - Are you aware of the food eco-footprint? List four ways that food production and distribution might negatively impact the environment.
- *Start a compost bin in your kitchen.* Keep it clean and fresh by emptying it every few days into a compost pile outside. Go online and check out "Composting for Kids" from Texas A&M Extension Service at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarden/kidscompost/cover.html>.
- *Plan and plant a small garden this spring* (if you don't have one already). If space is an issue, try cherry tomatoes, herbs, beans, or snow peas. Many vegetables can be grown in containers. Check out OSU Extension's Fact Sheet on Container Vegetable Gardening at <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/pdf/1647.pdf>
- *Ask your school cafeteria director* if they serve any local foods. Dig deep. Ask why or why not? There is a link where you can search for your school to see if they completed the farm to school census. Check it out here: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/census#/>
- *Do a quick internet search* on "local food in schools" and write a short essay (two or three paragraphs) describing your findings. Could your school participate? What foods would be easy to begin with?
- *Organize a campaign* to ask your school to offer fruit that is grown locally. Include vending machines!
- *Ask your supermarket produce manager* if they purchase foods that are grown or produced locally. Dig deep. Ask for their definition of "local." Do they consider it within a 50-mile radius? Or is it 250 miles? Not all "local" labels are equal.
- *Investigate restaurants* in your town that serve locally grown or produced foods. The next time your family eats out, ask to go to one of them. (And remember to tell the restaurant why you chose them!)
- *Investigate farmers' markets* in your area. How many are there? What days/hours do they operate? What types of foods and products do they sell?
- *Go online and search* for any Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or Food Co-Op operating in your area. Investigate the pricing structure. Compare it to supermarket expenses. Discuss with your family the benefits of fresh food, and what it means to buy directly from a local farmer. If they agree, sign up for the program!



Community Involvement Planning Template

Activity Selected:			
Goal (Think about: How many people will you involve? What do you hope to accomplish?):			
Tasks – list things to do	Timeline – list dates to accomplish each task	Resources – list supplies needed for each task	Responsibility – list person(s) involved with each task

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