

FOOD PRINT

Lesson Plan for Grades 5-12 - 30-45 minutes

Prepared by [Climate Change Connection](#)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Please see the document titled “Food Print Learning Outcomes” for grade 5-12 curriculum outcomes.

MATERIALS

Each student should have:

1. A copy of the Food Print worksheet
2. A pencil or pen
3. A food item/package
4. An atlas or internet access

BACKGROUND

Food and climate change are intimately connected. The climate has a major influence on what type of food can be grown in what environments. As our climate changes, our farming practices will need to adapt. Agriculture can be a large greenhouse gas (GHG) emitter. In recent years, agricultural practices have produced 31% of Manitoba’s GHG emissions, not including vehicle fuel and commercial heat. At the same time, agriculture also holds a lot of potential for pulling carbon out of the atmosphere and storing it in the soil.

Agriculture only makes up part of our food system. We need to think about how our food is processed, distributed, marketed, consumed and disposed of. There are opportunities at each step to reduce GHG emissions.

One hopeful trend in Manitoba is the growing number of small-scale farms who are choosing to market their products directly to consumers, through farm gate sales, farmers’ markets, food buying clubs and community supported agriculture (CSA) models. All of these approaches can reduce the distance food travels between “farm to fork” and the packaging needed to get it there. In order to reduce our impact on climate change, we can follow the guideline of 5 N’s.

These include:

- “Nearby”: buy food that is produced by farmers that live close, to greatly reduce the pollution created from transporting food all around the world.

- “Naked”: choose food that doesn’t have a lot of packaging.
- “New Now”: eat Canadian fruits and veggies at the time of year they grow, or grow your own veggies in your garden
- “Natural”: choose organic food that is free from pesticides that impact humans and the planet
- “Nutritious”: buy food that has low amounts of preservatives and chemical inputs

ACTIVITY

1. Explain that the choices we make about food can impact the environment and contribute to climate change. Describe the 5 N’s as a tool for making climate-friendly choices when selecting food.
2. Explain that students will use their food item as a guide to answer the questions on the worksheet. They will need to read the packaging label carefully to find the information, and will require an atlas or the internet to determine how many kilometres the food item has travelled.
3. Once students have filled out their worksheets, discuss their findings. Depending on the grade, consider using/adapting some of the following inquiry questions:
 1. Why does so much of the food we eat come from other countries and even other continents?
 2. What factors influence different families’ food choices?
 3. Why is so much of our food grown with synthetic fertilizers?
 4. How could we learn more about growing our own food?
 5. Were you surprised by any of the distances travelled or amount of pollution associated with specific foods?