Discover food's journey from the world to your mouth!

How does food's journey affect our environment?

What in the world can we do about it?
Everyone needs food. We need it for energy, for health and for survival. But did you ever wonder how the food on your plate finds its way to you? In this issue of Small World we’re going to follow the journey of food, from the world to your supermarket trolley. We’ll answer these questions:

- Where does the food we’re eating come from?
- Who is eating food made in Aotearoa New Zealand?
- How do these journeys affect our environment?

It’s a lot to think about, but don’t worry! This issue of Small World will help us get to the bottom of these questions.

The future of food...

Small World is a magazine produced for primary schools by the Global Education Centre (GEC), part of the Development Resource Centre, a national centre for education and information services on global and development issues. GEC provides free services to the formal and non-formal education sectors in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Many thanks to:

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Did you know...? I mohio rānei koe?

Silk worms are a tasty snack in the Republic of Korea! Some people in Cambodia eat fried crickets – they’re tasty and healthy. And right here in Aotearoa NZ, some West Coast locals tuck into steaming possum pies. It’s true! Finding out about food in other places is a great way to understand how other people live. To see cool photos of food around the world, visit www.time.com. Search for ‘hungry planet’.

Keeping it fresh? Kia mata tonu?

An experiment in the movie Supersize Me showed that a serving of McDonald’s French fries didn’t rot at all, despite being in a jar for ten weeks! How is this possible? Sometimes it’s because preservatives are added to food to give it a longer shelf life. That means that food can last a long time without going off. It can travel all over the world, and still be safe to eat. Learn more at www.nzfsa.govt.nz. Search for ‘list of food additives’.

Investigation station Teihana tūhura

You can try this experiment with any food. Compare home made food, like biscuits, with a store-bought version that has preservatives (it will say on the back of the packet). Which lasts longer? Use the chart to help you.

<table>
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<th>What I want to know</th>
<th>What I think will happen and why</th>
<th>The experiment: how will I test this?</th>
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<td>Does food with preservatives last longer than food without?</td>
<td>I think that...</td>
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What is a good thing about food that lasts a long time? What might be not so good about it?

Global impact

The journey of food Te haere nui a te kai!

Our food travels, from the world to Aotearoa NZ and back again. Let’s look at the journeys of a fruity favourite, the banana, and our own home-grown goodies. Where is our food going, and where does the food we’re eating come from?

Long distance banana He panana haere tawhiti

In Aotearoa NZ, we eat a banana called the Cavendish banana. It grows in warm climates. On the map below are three of the countries that grow this lunchtime favourite.

Shipping dairy products (e.g. milk, cheese) to China 9,129 Km The same as travelling from Invercargill to Auckland eight times.

Getting bananas from Costa Rica 11,729 Km The same as travelling between Auckland and Invercargill ten times.

Work it out! Tauria! If Costa Rica sent bananas to us two times a year, how many food kilometres would be travelled? How many kilometres would be travelled if Aotearoa NZ sent butter twice a year to China?

Today – Aotearoa NZ; tomorrow – the world! Hei Aotearoa i te-nei ra-a-po-po– hei te ao!

While bananas are winging their way to us, we’re sending our own food out into the world. Take a look at the goodies we grow, and where they’re all going.

The real ‘leftovers’ Ngā tino ‘toenga’

Whenever we use electricity or fuel to make or move food, a gas called carbon is left behind. Things like fridges, stoves, kettles and blenders all use electricity, and all leave a carbon trail. Aeroplanes, cars or ships use fuel. They leave carbon behind too.

On the move I te nekehanga

A food ‘mile’ or food kilometre is all about the distance food travels from where it grows to where it is sold and eaten.

Powering food Te whakapakari i te kai

A carbon footprint is about how much carbon is left behind. The more power we use, or the further we travel, the bigger the footprint. If we make too much carbon, it gets trapped in our air, and slowly heats our planet. This is known as climate change. This is because scientists think that the build up of gases, like carbon, will change the earth’s weather.

Did you know? I mohio rānei koe?

Undercover banana
Banana trees aren’t trees at all, they’re giant herbs! And the banana fruit is actually a false berry! How sneaky is that?

Put on your thinking cap Kuhuna to pōtae whakaaro

How can we eat the exotic foods we enjoy without making all of that carbon? Talk with your classmates and come up with some creative ways of growing food, without harming the environment.
Putting food on the table  

Te hoatu kai ki te tēpu

Whether they’re living in Aotearoa NZ or on the other side of the planet, people are working hard to grow food for the world. It’s an important job. Without them, we could all go hungry.

Look at the photos. What are some of the different areas involved in making our food? Imagine that you work in one of these places. What would your day be like? Write a story, a diary entry or draw a picture of ‘a day in the life’ of your chosen job.

Track it  

Whāia atu

Next time you’re in the fruit and veggie section at the supermarket, find out what other countries are growing your goodies. Then visit www.mapcrow.info and work out how far it’s all travelled.

Growing local  

Te whakatupu ā-takiwā

People all over the world are thinking of clever ways to cut down on food kilometres, keep their carbon footprint small, and still eat great food.

Slow food

Slow food is a movement where people are eating the local, natural way – that means no preservatives – just fresh and healthy food they grow themselves. People in 65 countries are already hooked: Argentina, the Philippines, the Ivory Coast in Africa, and Aotearoa NZ, are just some of the nations who are into slow food.

Find out more at www.ecofriendlykids.co.uk. Look under ‘food’.

100 mile diet

In the USA, some folk are looking closer to home for their meals. They are only eating food that grows within 100 miles (160 kilometres) of where they live. This means finding local fruit and vegetables, bread and milk, meat and anything else they fancy eating. It’s tricky to do, but it cuts down on their food miles and carbon footprints!

www.100milediet.org will tell you all about this amazing diet.

Key words  

Ngā kupu matua

- **Climate**: the kind of weather different places have, e.g. hot climates or cold climates
- **False berries**: don’t have hard stone centres like true berries. Bananas, blueberries and cranberries are all false berries
- **Carbon**: a gas that is leftover after using power or energy
- **Carbon footprint**: how much carbon each person makes
- **Climate change**: a change in the world’s weather due to a build up of some of the gases that surround the earth.

Sources  

Local action  Hei mahi i to-rohe

The fruits of Matariki  Te kai o te Matariki

Nā Hīria McRae, Te Kura Māori, College of Education, Victoria University of Wellington

Matariki is a star cluster that appears in the sky in late May or early June. To some Māori iwi, it means the start of a new phase of life. Matariki can be understood in two ways – Mata Riki (Tiny eyes) and Mata Ariki (Eyes of God). Either way, the eyes are thought to watch over the land and its people.

Celebrations begin at the next new moon after Matariki has risen, usually in June. Traditionally, Matariki arrived at the end of the harvest, so it was a time of plenty. Kūmara and other root foods were harvested. There were big catches of fish, and native berries and pikopiko were gathered. Matariki was a time to share and an important way of showing manaakitanga, welcoming and showing respect to visitors. It was also a time to store food and prepare for less plentiful times of the year.

Today Matariki is a popular event for many people in Aotearoa NZ. It is a time to gather, to feast and to celebrate the next year together.

Sources

What’s for lunch? He aha te tina?

Food is important to everyone, and no two people eat the same way. Take a look inside these lunchboxes.

Yvonne, 11 years
1 sandwich
1 banana
1 nut bar
1 small packet of chips
1 store-bought biscuit

Hamish, 7 years
1 banana
2 peanut butter sandwiches
1 homemade muffin
1 sausage
2 biscuits

Key words Ngā kupu matua
Matariki  a group or cluster of stars seen in the winter
Iwi      the Māori word for tribe
Harvest  gathering food that has finished growing and is ready to eat.
Pikopiko fern fronds
Manaakitanga welcoming and showing respect to visitors
Hākari   a feast

Digest this  Kainga tēnei

Which of these lunch foods might be grown in Aotearoa NZ? Which might come from another country?

Compare your lunch box with a friend or classmate. What is the same or different? Which of your lunch items might come from another country? What might be locally made?

NAME: Bella Maresca
AGE: 7 SCHOOL: Rata Street School
What is your favourite food to get in your lunchbox? What is it made of?
On my birthday, my parents give me lollipops – but only for my birthday.
Sugar. You get green, yellow and red lollipops – my favourite is red. Food colouring makes them red.

Is all the food you eat made in Aotearoa NZ?
Yes - it comes from New Zealand. But not bananas - I've never seen them grow in New Zealand.

NAME: Stefanija Paleaae
AGE: 9 SCHOOL: Thorndon School
What is your favourite food to get in your lunchbox? What is it made of?
Sandwiches. I like brown bread with cheese and ham. Inside the bread might be seeds - like sunflower seeds. Different sorts of chemicals make the cheese.

Where does it come from? Is all the food you eat made in Aotearoa NZ?
The supermarket - and the supermarket gets it from all sorts of companies. It's not all made in New Zealand because some are made in China and Australia, they're just wrapped in New Zealand.

So, what do you think?
Nā reira he aha ōu whakaaro?
You've heard what these children have to say. So what do you think? Answer the questions yourself, or interview your friends or family, and find out about the journey of their favourite lunchtime treats.

How big is our carbon footprint?
Pēhea te nui o ōtou tapuwae waro?
We already know that food is coming in and out of Aotearoa NZ from all over the world. It’s great that we’re helping to get food to other places, but we have to reduce the impact of our carbon footprint on the environment.

Luckily, the government is already thinking of some solutions.
Aotearoa NZ has signed the Kyoto Protocol, a set of rules about how to help reduce climate change. Signing it is a step in the right direction. It means that we have agreed to think up ways to make less carbon, or help clean up the carbon we do make. That’s great news.

Key words Ngā kūpu matua
Kyoto Protocol a set of rules for stopping global warming. It is named after Kyoto, Japan where it was started. 55 countries have signed it so far.
Taking positive action

What can I do? Me aha ahau?

Get into food!
- Respect your food! It travels a long way, so don’t waste it – enjoy it!
- Be part of food’s journey. Why not help your parents cook dinner, or if you can, cook it for them. You’ll have fun, and they’ll love you for it.
- Start a garden at home or at school. Growing your own grub is good for the environment – and it tastes wonderful!
- Find out about what food means to other people. Research foods from other cultures and create an international menu of food for your classroom. Stage a food of the world day at school and discover these tasty dishes for yourself.
- June 5th is World Environment Day so get involved and do something about carbon footprints! When you can, get your family to walk to the shop instead of driving. Or try to buy food from your local farmers’ market. Your family will save petrol and cut back on carbon.

Treat or trash? He kai rangatira, he kai koretake rânei?

Our lunches travel a long way to reach us, so it’s important that we respect it. Instead of throwing perfectly good food in the rubbish, take it back home for someone else to eat. Better yet, why not tell your family not to put it in your lunchbox? That way, it won’t be wasted.

Spongebob respects food.

“Gary, you better call an astronomer, because this clotted cream is OUT OF THIS WORLD!” SpongeBob


Websites Te ipurangi

Organic.org www.organic.org/kids
A site just for kids. Games and recipes will keep you busy and learning about tasty organic food.

The Greens www.meetthegreens.org
Flash animation of ideas for clean, green living! Each episode has heaps of activities and ideas to keep you on track with composting or shrinking your carbon footprint.

Dr E’s energy lab www.eere.energy.gov/kids
All the way from America, this is a website about saving energy and reducing carbon footprints. The site has loads of games, videos and easy ideas for saving the planet.

Eco Bunnies www.youtube.com (search for eco bunnies). A short video with two switched on rabbits. They’ll tell you all about carbon footprints and give easy action ideas for making them smaller.

Sustainability.govt.nz www.sustainability.govt.nz/energy
This site has tips for things your family can do to use less energy and ‘do your bit’ for the environment.

“I really wanna work on making my carbon footprint smaller - you know, recycle more or bike to work”

Source: www.whatnow.tv