

What's Available and What's Not

FOOD PLACES VISITED:

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

What were the top three tasty-looking and ready-to-eat fruits or vegetables?

Why?

What labels did they have?

Where were they from?

What's their estimated food mileage or food print? Make a note about a few fruits for which you can calculate the food mileage or food prints.

What fruits or vegetables looked not so tasty/ready to eat?

Why not?

What labels did they have?

Did you find anything organic? Where was it from?

Did you find anything grown in this state? What?

WHAT IS MISSING?

Among the fresh foods you found, what was missing?

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CORNY LABELS/PROCESSED FOOD

Read the labels on an assortment of packaged foods (cereals, cookies, chips). How many list “corn” as an ingredient?

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How many list “corn syrup”?

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How many list ingredients you’re not sure of, or that don’t sound like food? Make a note about a few ingredients you can look up online later.

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NEAR AND FAR

Can you find any locally produced food? What?

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What foods can you find that are made within 100 miles of your community?

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What items seem to come from farthest away?

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FAIR TRADE

Can you find any foods labeled Fair Trade? What? Where are they from? How much do they cost, compared to a similar product without a Fair Trade label?

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COOL STUFF

What kinds of food items have COOL (Country of Origin Labeling)? Which don’t? What other questions could we ask about meat and dairy products?

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FOOD FORAGE

Location	What's made there?	What's shipped in from other places?	Where do the key ingredients and supplies come from? (At the bakery, what grains are used?)	What's the most "locally made" item available?
SUPERMARKET				
FARMERS' MARKET				
FOOD CO-OP				
HEALTH FOOD STORE				
MEAT MARKET				
BAKERY				

Team Twists

TASTE, VALUE, FOOD PRINT: Everyone (or each mini-team) agrees to bring back the same item from a different place. Make it something that fits your budget and can be found in most stores. An in-season fruit, perhaps? When the team gets back together, compare notes on price, taste, label, and food print. Which came from nearest you? Farthest? If one was organic, can you notice a difference in taste? How about locally grown? Locally grown and organic?

ITEM	PRICE	TASTE	LABEL	FOOD PRINT

MAKING A MEAL OF IT: Agree on a simple, balanced meal with four or five ingredients—a protein, a carb, and a veggie or two. Perhaps chicken, a green vegetable, and a potato or rice dish. Price out these ingredients at various locations, and also a prepared meal that offers something as close as possible. Hint: Compare the “whole ingredients” of a dinner to fast-food and prepared frozen versions. What’s the most economical option? Most convenient? Tastiest? Best for you and Earth?

OUR MEAL made from scratch:					Pre-Made Version (fast food or frozen)
INGREDIENTS					
COST					

VEGGIE TWIST: Do the above, but with a vegetarian meal. Make sure it includes protein and is something you would eat! Or have one team do a veggie twist and another do a “meaty” twist. Which one has the lowest food print? Which would you rather eat?

GO LOCAVORE: If you could only buy food grown and produced within 100 miles of your community, what would you come home with? Could you make a meal of it? What?

OUR LOCAL MEAL:				
INGREDIENTS				
COST				
CONCLUSIONS				

Talking It Up

Who can you talk to? Someone unpacking fruits in the produce aisle? The manager of the supermarket? A customer ahead of you in the line? The owner of a bakery? A cook at a restaurant? You can learn something new from all of them!

Here are some questions to get you started:

What is that you're unpacking? Do you recommend it?

What's the best value in your store this week? What do you recommend we try?

What leads you to shop at this store? How often do you go grocery shopping? Do you prefer shopping more frequently or less?

What's your favorite food to make from scratch?

Beyond the Food!

While out and about, keep in mind these topics. They influence the food network, and food prints!

Food advertisements: What words and images are used to influence your food purchases? What seems right? What seems wrong? What seems real? What seems fake? What do you wish you could find/see that you don't?

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Convenience: Everyone's busy. Think about your family's schedule and lifestyle. How convenient is it for you and the adults in your life to shop at each place you visited?

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Accessibility: Who could shop at each place you visited? Is there parking? Access by a bus or train? Could people bike (food print!)? How would people with disabilities shop there?

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Customer friendliness: Is this a place you and your friends could go to? Why or why not? What if you shopped with food stamps? Had a very limited budget?

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Role in the local economy: Who and how many people work here? Are people from your own community able to make a living here? What kind of living? Where do profits go? Who benefits? What charitable or community efforts does this business support?

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Environmentally savvy: How much paper do you see being wasted? Plastic? Can you reuse your bag? Compost food? Recycle? How green is the building? What else do you notice about how much the habits here help or hinder the environment? How does all that add to a food print?!

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