



# KICK OFF DAY PREPARATION

Pre-installation day activity: 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## Activity Outcomes

- Students will be able to illustrate our relationship with food, including plants and animals.
- Students will understand the benefits that will be provided to their school and community through the Learning Garden.

## Materials and Preparation

- Remind students prior to the activity to make note of their lunch.
- Teacher Note: If food access presents a challenge for any of your students, you may choose to do this activity with a sample lunch from the cafeteria.
- Student Hand Out (1 per student)

## Teacher Background

In preparation for their new Learning Garden, students will analyze their lunch (or a sample lunch) to discover their food's origin while discussing the connection to their new Learning Garden.

This activity is meant to start a conversation with your students about where our food comes from. Students will explore where our food comes from and the effects this has on our environment and community. This activity serves as a good starting point to connect students to real food and to grasp the importance and benefits of having a Learning Garden at their school.

## Introduction

Ask students to think about where their food comes from. After a few seconds, ask students to share their thoughts on where their food comes from.

Ask students where they normally get their food from. Supermarket? Restaurant?

Ask students if anyone has ever grown their own food before.

Explain to students that a Learning Garden will soon be built at their school, which will be a place for us to grow, harvest and eat fruits and vegetables. In preparation for this, we will examine what was in our lunch today to better understand our relationship with food and the benefits the Learning Garden will provide to our school and community.

## Classroom Activity

Pass out the Student Handout and have students complete the activity individually.

The Student Handout will ask students to list what they had for lunch and answer discussion questions.

## Conclusion

Ask your students to total up their food item miles and record those answers on the board. Ask students the following questions:

Overall, how do you think your ingredients got to your plate? (i.e. train, car, bus, plane, truck)

What negative effects does food traveling from far away have on the environment?

Which of the plants above would you like to grow in your Learning Garden?

What positive effects will your Learning Garden have on your community and environment?

Review the list of plants that your students would like to grow. Identify the plants that can and cannot grow in your region. Let the students know that this information will be used to help plan your Learning Garden!

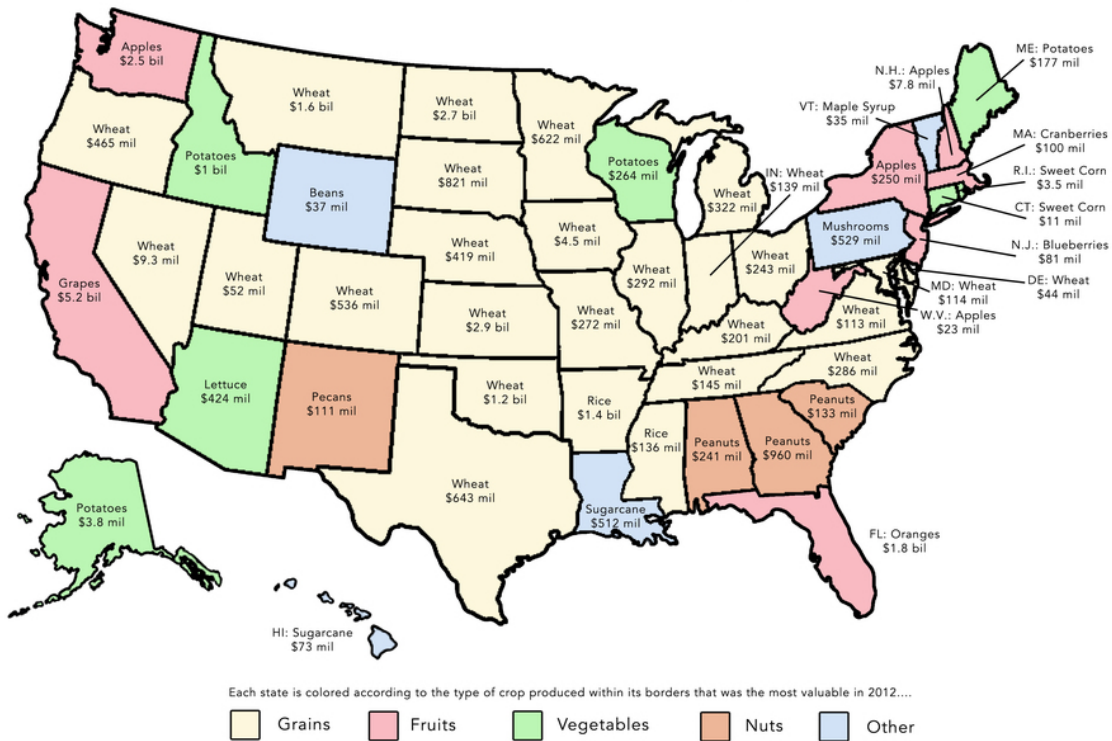
Have students share out key parts of today's discussion and review the Activity Outcomes.

# Student Handout

List the ingredients of your lunch today and circle the items that come from plants.

Using the food map below and mark each state associated with the food item circled above.

## The Most Lucrative Food Crop In Each State



Use Google Maps to find out how many miles each of your food items has traveled to your plate

Food Item	Miles	Food Item	Miles

**TOTAL FOOD MILES:**