



# ***KICK OFF DAY PREPARATION***

Pre-installation day activity: High School

---

## **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
- Allow access to computers for internet research
- 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 Handout (1 per student or group)

## **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 or in small groups.

## **Conclusion**

Create a space for students to share out their answers to the discussion questions.

Post large pieces of paper around the classroom, have students rotate around the room and record their answers. Use these questions and answers to lead a class discussion about the benefits of their new Learning Garden and the environmental issues that surround our food system.

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

**Step One:** List the ingredients of your lunch today, or a sample lunch menu that your teacher provided, in column one on the chart below.

**Step Two:** Once you have listed all of the ingredients, decide if the ingredient is a plant, meat, dairy, or other item. List these findings in column number two.

**Step Three:** Research each of your ingredients (plants, meat, and dairy) to find out where this food item is normally grown or raised. Use Google Maps to find out how many miles your ingredient has traveled to your plate. List the food location and miles in column three.

**Step Four:** Once you are finished, answer the discussion questions below.

Ingredient	Plant, Meat, Dairy, Other	Food Location and Miles

## Discussion Questions:

Total up your food miles, how many miles did your lunch travel to reach your plate?

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?

