

# Food

CREATED BY YOUR STUDENT  
SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION  
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## LINKS

[www.isec.org.uk](http://www.isec.org.uk)

[www.fao.org/sd/index\\_en](http://www.fao.org/sd/index_en)

[www.sustainablefoodcenter.org](http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org)

[www.ifpri.org](http://www.ifpri.org)

[www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)

[zzyx.ucsc.edu/casfs](http://zzyx.ucsc.edu/casfs)

[www.yale.edu/sustainablefood](http://www.yale.edu/sustainablefood)

## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

There is a great diversity of food products at the market; much of it shipped many miles so that you can have it with your meal. Bananas are shipped green through port waters, and grains are trucked in from the Midwest. Ignoring the seasonal nature of fruits, produce is carted into supermarkets at great lengths to appear year round. These food miles translates into gallons of petroleum burnt per meal, and copious amounts of greenhouse gasses released for its transportation.

The increasing concoction of pesticides sprayed onto crops do more than eliminate the insects that potentially prey on the food you will eat. It also kills benign insects that help keep the ecosystem in order. Through magnification of the toxic substances used as pesticides, the birds that eat the poisoned bug accu-

mulates the toxins in their own tissue. As the food chain plays out, the creatures that occupy the top echelon of the network are the ones that will have ingested the most of these accumulated chemicals: humans.

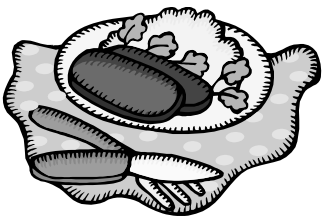
Now onto the topic of the wrapper. Excessive packaging that is often used once and discarded, adds extra junk to the waste stream in addition to the pollution and energy used in its production.

So buy smart. Both you and the environment will be healthier for doing so.



## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Shop at local farmer's markets.
- Buy organic and natural foods whenever possible.
- Find out where your food comes from and try to buy local when possible.
- Start or volunteer at a community garden to grow your own fruits and vegetables.
- Try not to buy foodstuffs at the market that are overly wrapped in packaging.
- Shop seasonally. Buy oranges in the winter, strawberries in the spring, and watermelon in the summer. It takes a lot of energy to freeze or import food that isn't readily available.
- Buy fair trade. You'll help out more people than you realize.
- Compost your organic wastes and use it to fertilize your garden. What comes out of the earth needs to go back.
- *The global food system is one of the single most important causes of increased greenhouse gases; in the US it accounts for almost 1/5 of the nation's energy use.*
- *Per capita, the US uses more energy for food production, processing and distribution than Asia and Africa use for all activities combined.*
- *In the US, the use of pesticides has increased 33 fold since 1945.*
- *Globally, pesticides kill 20-40,000 farmers each year.*
- *Simply buying 10% of our most common fruits and vegetables locally would save more than 300,000 gallons of fossil fuel and keep up to 8 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> from being emitted.*
- *Over 1/4 of meals consumed in US are 'fast food.' 1/5 of all meals are consumed in a car.*
- *Buying direct from local farmers generates 44% more revenue for the local economy than purchasing food at supermarkets.*



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