# FOOD MILES

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Our food travels on average travels over 10,000 miles to get on our plates, often times in destructive ways for the environment and others, this allows for students to see the importance of buying local.

*Time needed: 45 minutes*

## Materials

- Food items with labels denoting where it came from with a mix of food from all from over the world, country, and locally.
- Paper
- Pen
- String/yarn
- Computer



**FIGURE 1** Many of the tropical fruits we love come from many miles away.

**STANDARDS**: 5.P.1, 5.P.1.2

## LET'S DO IT!

**Opening Questions**

- Ask students to name some of their favorite foods? Favorite fruits and vegetables?
- Ask them what food do they see grown in their neighborhood/community?
- Ask students if they know one of the foods used in a meal they had recently?
- From the meal they had, ask if they know at which store the food items was bought?
- Ask the students if they know at least one of the food items from your dinner was grown at a farm in the US?
- Ask students if they know at least one of the food items from their dinner was grown at a farm in NC?
- Have a short discussion of the availability of various fruits and vegetables and pros/cons for importing produce

1. Assign each group some food items. For example, bananas from Costa Rica or blueberries from Burgaw, NC.
2. Have each group guess and record their guesses
3. Use the food miles calculator: www.foodmiles.com
4. Critical thinking, make an educated guess, examples: Do we live by a port? Is the country closer to the sea? Would it make sense to fly or drive?

## TALK IT OVER

1. How far do we see our food travelling?
2. What patterns do we see?
3. Where do we get our food? Supermarket, corner store, markets, etc.
4. What do you consider when purchasing food? Price, taste, quality, amount, packaging, etc.
5. What are ways we can reduce our impact of 'food miles' on the environment?
6. How can the community make this most plausible?