

Global Learning Unit

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COUNTRY:	Italy
TITLE:	Junk food and food waste
STUDENTS' AGE:	14-18 years
SUBJECTS:	Food adulteration and waste
DURATION:	10

Competences:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Mathematical skills and basic competences in science and technology
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic skills
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

Objectives:

- Understanding why many industrial foodstuffs may appeal to the eye and to the taste buds, but have poor nutritional value and health benefits.
- Analysing the causes of food fraud and its potential consequences.
- Knowing about the laws and organisations that protect consumers.
- Considering the issue of food waste and its causes in today's society.
- Becoming aware of how to consume food in a smart way.

Activities:

1. Junk food

Have a look at the packaging information of certain industrial foods and drinks (e.g. fish sticks, orange juice, etc.) and check what they contain. See what is not necessary and what could even be harmful.

Using the “mad cow” disease as an example, identify the reasons that lead to producing low quality food. Look up cases of food fraud and adulteration that took place over the past years in your country and abroad. By means of an internet search, find information about national and international organisations that protect consumers with laws, regulatory tools, awareness raising and denunciation campaigns.



2. Food waste

Since 1974, food waste grew by 50% globally. Let's try to find out how food is wasted, when and in what quantities and how we could end this waste in order to improve living conditions worldwide.

- How much do we waste?

- About 840 kg of food are produced yearly for every European. 560 kg are consumed. What happens to the remaining 280 kg?

- North Americans are not better: from the 900 kg of food at their disposal, they eat 600 kg. 180 kg are not even purchased and 120 kg are bought and thrown away.

- People in Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia waste less: about 6 kg per African and 11 kg per Asian. The amount of food at their disposal is also about half the food we have: 460 kg. And yet, even before this food reaches the consumer, 100-180 kg are wasted; in poor countries, food is wasted during the supply chain not upon consumption.

- Where do we waste? There are two kinds of food waste:

- **food loss:** refers to losses incurred in the initial stages of the food supply chain, mainly in the sowing, growing, harvesting, processing and preserving phase and in the first agricultural transformation.

- **food waste:** refers to the waste that takes place during industrial processing, distribution and final consumption.

- What else do we waste when we waste food?

- Money, time, land, water, fuel...

So what can we do?

Develop critical ways of thinking with regard to the reduction of food waste.

Consider the different ways in which food waste can be fought. For instance:

- by buying directly from the producers
- by buying little but often
- by buying less processed foods and more ingredients
- by opting for organic and small-scale producers
- by learning how to use leftovers in cooking



- by finding out which organisations collect foodstuffs for food banks and charity and supporting them (e.g. in Italy www.lastminutemarket.it, or www.bancoalimentare.it)
- by lobbying one's local council to join the network of local organisations committed to ending food waste (e.g. in Italy www.lastminutemarket.it/media_news/carta-sprecozero)

Teaching tools:

- Aa.Vv., *Global Food Losses and Food Waste. Extent, Causes and Prevention*, FAO, Roma 2011

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/mb060e/mb060e.pdf>

- The international organisation www.save-food.org

