

Part 3: Local Food Economy Game

NSF Farm Hub Project

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Modified from Coblyn, Sara (2008) French Fries and the Food System: A year-round curriculum connecting youth with farming and food. Lincoln, MA: The Food Project.

Timing within Module:

This activity is an introduction and should be completed prior to the research project.

Goal:

To encourage reflection and understanding of the purchasing power of the consumer and how a consumer's food choices have economic and environmental implications.

Learning Objectives:

1. To learn about organic vs. conventional product and locally grown vs. imported product and their effects on local economy and environment
2. To comprehend price differences between more expensive local businesses vs. lower-priced chains and their roles in the local food economy
3. To encourage thoughtfulness when choosing between convenience vs. quality
4. To understand how a \$1 is distributed within the food system

Materials:

Section 1: Pen, Play Money - \$10 for each student, extra for banker (*provided*), PowerPoint presentation (*provided*), Reflection Worksheet I & II (*provided*), Situation cards (*provided*), Excel spreadsheet (*provided*)

Section 2: Pen, PowerPoint (*provided*), Where Did Your \$1 Go? Worksheet (*provided*), Play Coins – 100 per group (*provided*), Labeled Jars (*provided*)

Preparation:

This lesson contains two sections to be completed in the following order:

1. Spaghetti Dinner (30 min) – in-class
2. Dollars & Sense (20 min) – in-class

Instructors should be familiar with content in the PowerPoint and Excel Files. Prior to class, instructor should place scavenger hunt cards at the appropriate farm locations.

Length:

A total of 50 minutes in-class is needed for this lesson.

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Section 1: Spaghetti Dinner

Prior to the lesson (Optional):

Select three students who would enjoy being the shop's representatives (Supermarket, Local Co-Op, and CUE Farm Stand). Allow them to see the appropriate slides for their respective shop prior to the lesson. The slides are already created where they would tell their peers the product prices and sourcing origins including prompts that may improve their sales.

Procedure:

1. Pass out the two Reflection Worksheets prior to the start of class.
2. Start the PowerPoint and go over objectives of the Local Economy Lesson (slide 2).
3. The students are preparing a spaghetti dinner for tonight, they will need to purchase ingredients: pasta and sauce (slide 3).
 - a. Pre-made spaghetti sauce
 - b. Tomatoes, peppers and onions to make sauce from scratch
4. Pass out \$10 to each shopper (shopkeepers can shop too!).
5. Three shopkeepers, or professor, will "pitch their products" (slides 4–6).
 - a. Shopkeepers need to say what their item is, its price, source of origin, and if it's organic.
 - b. To imply marketing hype, shopkeepers should stress convenience, quality or price as appropriate.
6. **Reflection 1: Ideal Grocery List** - The shoppers (and shopkeepers) will then be given time to reflect on which store(s) they intend to visit and why. (slide 7, allow for ~5 min.)
 - a. A slide with all 3 stores information and reflection questions is provided as they work through this reflection (slide 8).
7. Each shopper will now be given a situation card that may affect the purchasing decisions/power of the shoppers (slide 9)
 - a. Players who owe money or get to collect money should do so through the banker/professor.
8. **Reflection 2: C'est la vie! Grocery List** - The shoppers will now be given time to reflect on which store(s) they will visit and why under their new "situations". (slide 10, allow for ~5 min.)
 - a. A slide with all 3 store's information and reflection questions is provided as they work through this reflection (slide 11).
9. Have participants describe what they bought and the decision-making process they went through to make their purchases for both the first reflection and second reflection (slide 12).
10. When the discussion is complete, show top-level breakdown of Gross Sales & Local Economy Payback from each store (slide 13).
11. Open up Excel spreadsheet and first show how much would go back to the local economy if gross sales were all equal.
12. Tally up who bought what at each store and show the breakdown on the Excel spreadsheet. (This can be done for either Reflection I or II as the principle will be the same of the Supermarket giving back the least to the local economy and it increases as you increase local sourcing).

13. Speak about the realistic application of investing in our local economy via an infographic – Slide already in PowerPoint and pertains to study done in San Francisco (slide 14).
14. Go through top reasons from Vermont University why shopping local for food is helpful to our local economy and more (slides 15–17).
15. Cover ecological aspects that discuss how the CUE Farm produces food (local, organic, and sustainable) versus conventional modes (slides 18–25).

Reflection 2: C'est la vie! Grocery List

1. Reflect upon how your situation card has changed your grocery list and stores you wanted to visit. How has your “situation” changed your purchasing power?
2. Some situation cards have choices. Are there parts of your situation cards that you decided to act upon or not? Why?
3. Consider and answer which factors are playing a role such as price, quality, health, convenience, and environmental and economic impacts as you make your purchases – how has your situation changed the priorities of these factors?

Section 2: Dollars & Sense

1. Divide students into groups of 2–3 and give each group a bag with 100 coins.
2. Tell the students they have just bought a can of tomato sauce from the local supermarket for \$1.00 and this amount paid for the costs of growing and selling the tomatoes that are now the sauce (slide 26).
 - a. Ask the students to name a few places or people who you think received a portion of the dollar spent.
3. Show the slide with all the entities who received a portion of the dollar – some have definitions provided (slide 27).
4. Put jars labeled with each entity in the food chain out and pass out the Where Did Your \$1 Go? Worksheet.
5. Have groups use their worksheet and work as a group to decide how much of their dollar should go into each category. (slide 28, allow for about 10–15 min.)
6. Have groups place the appropriate number of coins in appropriate jars – this will help to give visual as to where the class put most of their coins.
7. Ask the groups what their two highest and two lowest categories were and reasoning.
8. Look at the jars for a visual of where the class as a group put the most and least amounts of coins.
9. Show the Food at Home Dollar in the PowerPoint slide that corresponds to the concept of the can of tomato sauce (slide 29).
 - a. Farm production corresponds to what the farmer receives.
 - b. Vast majority goes into non-food inputs.
10. Show the Food Away From Home Food Dollar in the PowerPoint that corresponds to when we eat out versus when you cook at home (slide 30).
11. Make sure to highlight the Farm Production and Foodservices (which was in the ‘Other’ category for Food at Home Dollar) differences between eating at home and eating out.
12. Cover the points in ‘How you can help slide’ and ask the students to reflect on ways they could help to support local businesses (slide 31).

Where Did your \$1 Go? Worksheet

You just spent a dollar at the grocery store to cook a meal at home—Where did your money go?
Answer in number of pennies/percentage of 100.

1. Farm Production
2. Agribusiness
3. Food Processing
4. Packaging
5. Transportation
6. Wholesale Trade
7. Retail Trade
8. Energy
9. Finance & Insurance
10. Other (Foodservices, advertising, legal & accounting)

Appendix A

Situation Cards

Hand out a situation card to each student.

Your friend needs you to grab some cough drops at the store. They will not be able to compensate you until you get home. You want to cook the healthiest spaghetti dinner possible for both of you. (Pay \$3)

You work at a coffee shop from 7 - 9 a.m., have class from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and then volunteer for a few hours. You will need to prepare dinner for yourself and will be very, very tired. The shared tip jar is split up at work and you wind up with an extra \$5 (Collect \$5)

You received a phone call to schedule a job interview after class. If it goes well, you may need to file HR paperwork - not getting home until late. You've been trying to eat healthier and avoid foods with additives.

You're making a spaghetti dish for a pitch-in this evening. You get off of work at 6 p.m. and need to be ready to leave by 7:30 p.m. You had budgeted \$15 for your grocery necessities for this event. (Collect \$5)

Your father wants to teach you how to make your grandma's homemade tomato sauce. You can bike around everywhere and save \$3 or take the bus and spend \$3 to gather your grocery items. It is 90 degrees outside. (Stay or Pay \$3)

You miss your bus and arrive home 2 hours later than normal. You promised to make dinner for your little siblings. Local Co-Op is slightly closer to your home. You have an extra \$5 in your purse for a cover charge to watch a band later. (Collect \$5)

You opted for a microbrew vs. a macro for a treat. This cost you \$4. You thought you had an extra \$10 on you, but it turns out your friend needed gas money and you helped cover them since they provide you with a ride so often. (Pay \$4)

You over-budgeted for your heat bill by \$2. You are cooking dinner for you and your friend tonight. You could also rent a movie for you and your friend for \$2. (Stay or Collect \$2)

You have been neglecting your pet due to your long hours at both work and school. While you are out grocery shopping, you see a toy that might help keep it occupied while you're gone. You are exhausted from lack of sleep and ready to have a homemade dinner. (Pay \$3)

You have been running late all day and need to go grocery shopping. The CUE Farm Stand is closest to you for some of your grocery items and you have been wanting to go. You can take a bus for \$3 to make up some lost time. (Stay or Pay \$3)

You forgot your lunch at home when you left and ate a few items from the vending machine. These delicious and artificial nibbles have left you craving fresh ingredients. (Pay \$2)

You've been checking in on your next door neighbor's cat. Your neighbor came home today. She is an elderly lady on a budget and wanted to offer you some form of gratitude, but accepting would make you feel guilty. Although, you are also on a tight budget and could use the extra money for groceries. (Stay or Collect \$5)

Appendix B

Price List

Items	Supermarket	Local Co-Op	CUE Farm Stand
Sauce	\$4.00	\$8.00	
Pasta	\$2.00	\$5.50	
Tomatoes	\$2.00	\$3.50	\$2.00
Onions	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$2.00
Peppers	\$1.50	\$3.50	\$2.00

Source List

Items	Supermarket	Local Co-Op	CUE Farm Stand
Sauce	Made in Italy	Made in Indianapolis from CA-grown, organic ingredients	
Pasta	Made in Tacoma, WA	Made in Indianapolis	
Tomatoes	Grown in FL	Grown in Indianapolis, organic	Grown in Indianapolis, organic
Onions	Grown in FL	Grown in Indianapolis, organic	Grown in Indianapolis, organic
Peppers	Grown in Holland	Grown in CA, organic	Grown in Indianapolis, organic