

2. FOOD AND GROWING

INTRODUCTION – Why is this a Global Justice Issue?

We live in a world where over 800 million people go to bed hungry yet we produce 1.5 times enough food to feed people on the planet.

There are a range of justice issues we can explore with our students:

- The commodification of food (*focus on making money rather than ensuring nutritious food and access*)
- Land grabs from smallholder farmers to sell to larger companies
- Mono-crops and use of pesticides and insecticides which impact health, water, soil and biodiversity
- Climate Change and the impact on farming communities e.g. flooding low-lying land affecting communities and crops such as in Bangladesh with rice-farming
- Irelands farming impact on climate change (32% Emissions in Ireland from farming)
- Control of seeds and lack of food diversity – with a reliance on only a small number of crops (12 plants provide 80% of the worlds food)
- Biofuels replacing agricultural lands
- Clearing of forest for agriculture and to grow feed for farm animals e.g. the Amazon
- Exploitation of those working on farms globally and of the natural world
- Sustainable and resilient farming systems

Actions which move towards sustainable food systems are essential. The food sovereignty movement has provided a strong grass roots response and something which can be interesting to explore with students. Particularly if they wish to have a school garden as an action. Gardens can be once framed as an act of solidarity -fighting for food sovereignty and against the unfair food system.

Teachers - further information:

Interesting webinar which explores farming and food from an Irish Perspective:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4N1Ear3i38&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2Qm0rzsCwagdzA7RZQDt_DSU6Cy5m2BvWAjgyrizcTBGrkGqy6fbrLYic

STEP 1: IDENTIFY TARGET GROUP

The themes outlined above can be explored in your subject areas or as part of a TY module.

SUGGESTED CURRICULUM LINKS:

- Business
- Home Economics
- Science
- Religious Education
- CSPE
- SPHE
- English (Wendell Berry)

SAMPLE LEARNING INTENTIONS:

- Distinguish between food security and food insecurity
- Describe factors that influence the global food production system
- Identify the impacts of climate change on small scale farmers globally
- Evaluate the ways in which our food production system can become sustainable
- Identify communities around the world who are creating local sustainable food systems.
- Identify reasons why food waste occurs at each stage of the supply chain
- Explain the different ways in which food waste can be reduced at a household and school level

STEP 2: CHOOSE A GLOBAL JUSTICE THEME

GLOBAL GOAL & INDICATORS ON FOOD:

This theme relates to a number of indicators within Goal 2 Zero Hunger. Primarily the indicator 2.4 looks at Sustainable food production and resilient agricultural practices. However, other indicators such as 'ensuring productivity and income for small-scale food producers' (2.3) and 'maintaining the genetic diversity of food production' (2.5) are pieces of the puzzle to having a health global food system and achieving 2.1. universal access to safe and nutritious food.

STEP 3: EXPLORE THE THEME

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS:

Resources:

The Human Face of Food

Overview: Excellent resource exploring agricultural, rural and fishing industries that produce food globally. Activities for students to explore the social impacts of these industries such as equality, economic growth and human rights for those that work within them. Links to own life and advocacy suggestions for students.

Link: <https://c15a759148e3465cc1e0-b5c37212e1d32204235caf5298e9144a.ssl.cf5.rackcdn.com/2017/07/The-Human-Face-of-Food-May-2018-Edits.pdf>

Plate Pioneerz for the Global Goals

Overview: A range of resources and lesson plans to support students exploring basic concepts around food, food waste,

Link: <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/healthy-not-hungry-food-projects-for-the-goals/>

Trociare (2010) The Business of Food: Who Makes the Rules?

Overview: This is a teacher pack for Business and CSPE teachers. It has been developed to explore with students the impact of trade on hunger and poverty in the

“Developing” world (Global South or Majority World). Suitable for use with students over 12 years.

Content:

- Classroom exercises and Lesson plans
- Video footage and stories
- Ideas for taking action

Link: <https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/resources/business-food-who-makes-rules>

Concern (2013) One in Eight

Overview: Students explore issues of food and hunger from a justice perspective.

Content: While this was designed for primary school students and slightly outdated – there are a number of very good activities that are suitable for junior cycle up to TY in “[Section 2 – Food hunger and the world](#)”. This section is an excellent introduction to justice issues around food.

Link: <https://developmenteducation.ie/media/documents/One%20in%20Eight.pdf>

Scoilnet – World Food Day

Overview: This webpage is a collection of resources for teachers to assist with teaching and learning on World Food Day.

Content:

- Activities by FAO, Concern Worldwide & Self Help Africa
- Lessons for Geography, Home Economics, science and CSPE
- Data on Hunger and food
- Myths about Global Hunger

Note: Needs a little adaption as a little bit outdated (facts) and relates to older Millenium Development Goals

Link: <https://www.scoilnet.ie/fr/post-primary/collections/junior-cycle/zerohunger/>

LASC (2018) Exploring Latin American Realities through Spanish

Overview: The resource aims to bring Latin American development issues into the classroom of Spanish Teachers to explore the root causes of global justice issues.

Content: This resource is for Spanish teachers in “[Food in Latin America](#)” explores issues of food sovereignty and how the current food system affects Latin America.

Link: <http://lasc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-Teachers-Manual-A4.pdf>

Self Help Africa (2020) Sustainable Agriculture

Overview: Provides an overview of issues around farming and food security. Focuses mostly African countries. Makes links to the Irish Famine.

Content: Provides a background for teachers on Women in Agriculture, Food Security and small-scale farming. Has activities, video clips and case studies.

Link: https://selfhelpafrica.org/ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/11/6_Toolkit-Sustain-Ag.pdf

WorldWide Global Schools (2018) Resources from Regional Teacher Training

Overview: The resource aims to bring Latin American development issues into the classroom of Spanish Teachers to explore the root causes of global justice issues.

Content: This resource is for Spanish teachers in “[Food in Latin America](#)” explores issues of food sovereignty and how the current food system affects Latin America.

Contact your Education Officer for these.

Short Video Clips:

Food & You – Oxfam’s Grow Video (7:20)

This animated story journeys through the broken food system and then looks at the transformation that is already underway to bring about change. It brings it back to you, the individual at the root level, and invites you to be part of the movement to grow a better future.

Note: Slightly outdated but very good at looking at root causes of food insecurity.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUveqzPnfmQ>

Fair food - What’s on your Plate? The Story of your food (3:03)

Very basic introduction to the story of our food. We consume a great variety of food that is grown by small farmers and workers all over the world. This video shows the impact of price pressure by retailers and brands on the working and living conditions of these workers, who often work long hours, in hazardous conditions and at wages below the poverty line”.

Note: Slightly outdated but good information on supermarkets role – though ultimately ends with a promotion around Fair food (the organisation)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXauFbCITWg>

Food for the Future: Agriculture in a Sustainable World (9:08)

This video outlines the key issues of modern agriculture globally. The video underlines the potential for "greening" agriculture and ensuring long-term food security while emphasizing the need to focus on improving the well-being of the majority of the poor and marginalized people who live and work in rural areas

Note: Footage is based on recordings and interviews from the UNRISD conference "Green Economy and Sustainable Development: Bringing back the Social Dimension" (2011). Might need a supplementary activity to help students understand all content.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOxJjs1-wQs>

Via Campesina – Trade and Agriculture (4:28)

A critical commentary on WTO trade agreements and the impact this has on food sovereignty and global wealth inequality.

Note: Might be interesting to look at this in conjunction to researching WTO – explore and discuss the various perspectives.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQcXyDfRTvI>

IPBES Assessment of Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production (4:28)

Aimed at decision makers in Government, business and communities to provide the best-available evidence to make better decisions - protecting pollinators, food security and the future we want.

Note: Given the target audience for this video, it talks about the impact of loss of biodiversity to the economy and jobs (rather than the communities that may be most affected). So will be important to ask follow on questions to elicit those discussions.

Link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwkYbeiwK5A

Ten Stories About Food Waste

“One-third of all the food the world produces ends up in the bin.* Some 70% of our business is related to food, and we feel we must engage in this global issue. With this documentary, Electrolux brings together key food experts weighing on the present and the future of sustainable food choices.”

Note: First two videos good for contextualising some issues in the global food system

Link: <https://www.electroluxgroup.com/en/ten-stories-about-food-waste-documentary-invites-to-change-24210/>

Documentaries:

Thank you for the Rain

This is the real life story of Kisilu, a Kenyan farmer used his camera to capture the impact of climate change on his family and their village. The story captures his journey to becoming an activist on the global stage.

Use your WWGS grant to download here: <https://thankyoufortherain.com/>

INFORMATION WEBSITES:

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IRELAND

Who: “Food Sovereignty Ireland is a movement of citizens striving for democratic control of our food system.”

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear outline of local to global justice links

Link:

<http://www.foodsovereigntyireland.org/what-is-food-sovereignty.html>

Latin American Solidarity Centre (LASC)

Who: LASC is a membership organisation who works in solidarity with Latin America to create real social change both in Latin America and Ireland.

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear examples and linkages between Latin America and Ireland

Link: <https://lasc.ie/issues/environment-2/food-sovereignty/>

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY GLOBALLY

La Via Campesina

Who: An international movement bringing together millions of peasants, small and medium size farmers and fishing folks from around the world. Together they defend food sovereignty as a way to promote social justice and dignity.

Offers: Lots of articles on food related issues such as food sovereignty, climate and environmental justice, seeds etc

Link: <https://viacampesina.org/en/what-are-we-fighting-for/>

FOOD WASTE

Stop Food Waste

Who: Is funded under the Environmental Protection Agencies National Waste Prevention Programme. It works with households, communities, schools, local authorities etc to educate and reduce waste.

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear outline of local to global justice links

Link: <https://stopfoodwaste.ie/about>

Food Cloud

Who: Foodcloud connects organisations with surplus food to local charities.

Offers: Infographic of food waste globally. Provides statistics on food poverty and world hunger globally and in Ireland.

Link: <https://food.cloud/the-problem/>

FARMING/ GROWING

Who: Foodture – a grassroots initiative to connect citizens to Fair Food Producers in Ireland and to offer them a platform to tell their stories (videos).

Offers: List of farms around Ireland (possible trips), podcasts, articles etc

Link: <https://foodture.ie/>

Who – Talamhbeo a member led organise of farmers growers and land-based workers based in Ireland organising for change in our food and agriculture systems.

Offers: Proposal of seven points for policy makers and politicians to face

Link: <http://www.irishorganicassociation.ie/>

Who – Permaculture Ireland is a group of people working together to offer events, courses and promote permaculture across the island of Ireland.

Offers: Details on what permaculture is and a map to find projects close to you.

Link: <https://permaculture.ie>

STEP 4: COLLABORATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

- Plan an awareness raising campaign for **World Food Day**- October 16th. This could involve a two minute talk/collage/ newspaper article on the issue. The campaign could take place in your school but also in your community.
- Identify a local farm on Foodture and ask if you can take the class their on **a school trip** to learn about how they grow food. **Take this learning back and share** with fellow students (display, assembly, peer-to-peer sessions, video etc)
- Alternatively find a local farmer on Foodture (or through other methods) and ask them to come into the school **to talk about the sustainable food practices** they implement. They may be able to guide you on your school garden too!

STEP 5: TAKING MEANINGFUL ACTION

[Ideas for School Community Actions:](#)

- **Tackle Food Waste in the School**

Research how food waste is dealt with in your school and create a **campaign to reduce the waste** and ensure food that is wasted is disposed of through the correct waste system (brown bin). Contextualise this with an **awareness campaign around global food production**. Create a visual representation of the food system from farm to fork. Identifying how food is wasted through this process. Make links to climate change, pollution from mass agriculture, biodiversity etc. Include in your campaign the message to reduce food waste by freezing fresh produce and leftovers.

- **Start a campaign to reduce meat consumption – perhaps meat free or vegan on key days**

Ensure this is done in consultation with people. Do an awareness raising campaign around meat consumption as an environmental and justice issue. Ask people to opt in, or sign up. Do not shame people for eating meat!

Ideas for Local and National Community Actions:

- ◇ **School / Community Garden**

Students can research and create a **school garden** using organic / permaculture principals. Engage the community so that the garden can remain open and maintained during the school summer. The garden can be used as an Educational tool for both students and the community. Students can raise awareness (step 4) and develop and run hands-on structured peer-to-peer sessions on the issues of food justice and the importance of food sovereignty. They create a series of activities such as:

- Showing videos on the global impacts of food injustice,
- Facilitate dialogue on sustainable farming practices V industrial practices
- Do hands-on growing with students – outlining the practical benefits of organic/permaculture principals
- Save your own seeds

TIPS:

- ◇ Buy heirloom plants from local farms
- ◇ Save seeds and grow some of your own to support plant diversity and help preserve genetic diversity in plants
- ◇ Ensure that you contextualise **this activity as an act of solidarity with farmers around the world** who are negatively affected by, and taking action to improve, the Global Food system.
- ◇ Consider creating a campaign for parents to buy local and in-season food.

- **Work with the local community to become a ‘pollinator-friendly’ and actively increase biodiversity and conversations around food sustainability practices in your local community** – Do an information session in your school inviting major stakeholders in the community including the tidy towns, business, farmers and local community groups. Showcase the global justice issues around unsustainable food practices and biodiversity loss. Give examples of how indigenous groups globally have been fighting for food sovereignty and inspire the community to do their part locally to join this movement to become more biodiversity and food friendly. Invite them to join to implement the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Brainstorm ideas with them for how we might increase biodiversity locally and sustainability locally. Decide the priorities with the most impact. Organise into working groups to work on the top ideas or create a timeline where you can do one task at a time.

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan: <https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/All-Ireland%20Pollinator%20Plan%202015-2020.pdf>

Sign your community up here: <https://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie>

Here are some ideas: <https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/communities-helping-our-endangered-pollinators/>

- Become a **Fairtrade school**. Ways that schools can make a difference are: buying Fairtrade products; running Fairtrade awareness events or competitions; organizing a sale of Fairtrade products in local shops; or giving the Fairtrade catering list to a local coffee shop or hotel. Visit www.fairtrade.ie for more information. Be clear with students and teachers about why being a Fairtrade school is important and the impact this has on peoples lives.
- Research Irelands “Food Harvest 2020” Policy and how it links with the global goals. See www.developmentperspectives.ie/harvest-2020 for more details. You might **write to Minister Creed (Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)** with key points you have learned and questions/ demands you have.

Ideas for European and Global Community Actions:

- **Consumer Advocacy Task:** Use the ‘Human Face of Food’ activity from the resource above. This involves students reflecting on the impact their daily choice has on the lives of the farmers and what they can do to make it fairer for the people who grow their food.
 - Write a letter to a food vendor, agri company, or government official making the case for the Global Goals and asking them to implement a specific change (e.g. eliminate forced labour from their supply chain, endorse a policy for supporting women’s access to financial services to grow their farm business, challenging discrimination in the industry).
 - Write a letter directly to a local or international farmer and inquire about the farmer’s training, passion, stewardship, and craft and how they think their work contributes to the Global Goals.
 - Ensure you follow up until you get a response.
- **Join global campaigns to end injustice in the food supply and highlight successes!** Encourage students to conduct research project to discover global justices with regards to farming. Using the Amnesty International website, and searching “[Farm](#)”, or [Via Campesina](#) website, find stories from the create case studies showcasing farmers and workers who are resisting injustices and fighting to improve sustainable farming practices. Create a school wide awareness campaign pledging support for human rights, especially in protection from violence and intimidation and showcasing the work of communities worldwide to fight food injustice.