

# Lesson 5

Trace the Fruit and Vegetable Trail



## Lesson Summary



### Overview

The garden detectives read a story about how fruits and vegetables are grown and move from the farm to school or home. They answer comprehension questions about the story and solve math problems related to the farm-to-school theme. These materials may be used in class and/or as homework assignments for students.



### Lesson Extensions

An extension to the lesson has students investigating ways their school could work with local farmers, either by starting a farmers market at the school, having a farm-related fundraiser, or looking for ways to use more locally grown foods in the lunch room. In this activity, students are asked to talk to other students, parents, the school food service director, and school administrators.

In another extension, students make a field trip to the farmers market to interview farmers.



### Key Messages

**Farms, orchards, and gardens grow fruits and vegetables that help you grow and stay healthy.**

**Know your farmer. Know your food.** Fruits and vegetables do not have to travel as far when you buy from local farmers. Farms can also be a great place to learn about where your food comes from.



### Garden Connection

The garden detectives relate how food grown in a garden, as well as food grown on a farm or in an orchard, can become food that is eaten at home, in restaurants, or at school. They take a photograph (or create a drawing to scale) of their assigned fruit or vegetable in the garden each week and post it on the bulletin board. As they do so, they report to the rest of the class on how their plants are growing.



### Community Connection

Invite a local farmer to speak to your class about what fruits and vegetables he or she grows and how he or she sells the produce to the public. If time and resources permit, visit a local farm or community garden.



### School Food Service Connection

If your school cafeteria is involved in farm-to-school efforts, ask your school food service director to talk with the class about which foods are grown locally.



### Home Connection

Send the *Garden Detective News* home to parents/caregivers. Encourage students to complete the farm-to-table maze and to investigate local farmers markets with their parents/caregivers.

## Main Lesson: Trace the Fruit and Vegetable Trail

### Standards Addressed

#### English/Language Arts

Standard 1, Reading Informational Text, Grade 3: *Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.*

Standard 1, Reading Informational Text, Grade 4: *Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.*

#### Mathematics

Standard 8, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Grade 3: *Solve two-step word problems using the four operations.*

Standard 3, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Grade 4: *Solve multistep word problems posed with whole numbers and having whole-number answers using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies, including rounding.*

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Explain where fruits and vegetables come from.
2. Demonstrate reading comprehension skills.
3. Demonstrate arithmetic problem-solving skills.

### Time Required

75 minutes

- 35 minutes to read story
- 40 minutes to complete reading and math worksheets

### Materials

- *Student Handout 5.1, Terry and Sam Solve the Mystery of Where Fruits and Vegetables Come From*
- *Student Handout 5.2, Reading Comprehension Questions*
- *Student Handout 5.3.1, Farmer Brown Does the Math (less advanced)*
- *Student Handout 5.3.2, Farmer Brown Does the Math (more advanced)*

### Preparation

- Review *Student Handouts 5.3.1* and *5.3.2* and select the one(s) best for your students.
- Duplicate *Student Handouts 5.1, 5.2,* and *5.3* on 3-hole-punch paper for each student.
- Review the Teacher Background Information, including the handout answer sheets.

## Instructional Process

### STEP 1

**Introduce the story by asking students:**

- Where do you think fruits and vegetables come from?

Some students may say the grocery store or supermarket.



**Ask them:**

- How do fruits and vegetables get to the grocery store/supermarket?

Listen to students' answers. Make sure that students understand that fruits are grown in orchards and farms and vegetables are grown on farms.

Explain that today students will read a story about 3rd and 4th grade students who take a field trip to a farm.

### STEP 2

**Have students read the story.** Distribute *Student Handout 5.1, Terry and Sam Solve the Mystery of Where Fruits and Vegetables Come From*. Explain to the students that it is important “to know your farmer, know your food.” Farms can be a great place to learn about where your food comes from.

Have students read the story to themselves silently.

### STEP 3

**Have students complete the reading comprehension questions.** Distribute *Student Handout 5.2, Reading Comprehension Questions*. Have students complete the handout. You may wish to collect the completed handouts for grading before proceeding with a class discussion.

Review the questions and answers to the reading comprehension questions with the class.

### STEP 4

**Have students complete the math problems.** Distribute *Student Handout 5.3, Farmer Brown Does the Math*. Have students complete the handout. You may wish to collect the completed handouts for grading before proceeding with a class discussion.

Review the questions and answers to the mathematics questions with the class.

## Teacher Background Information

# Helping Students Trace the Fruit and Vegetable Trail

### Vocabulary

**Community:** A group of people living within a common geographic area and/or a group of people who share common interests.

**Community supported agriculture (CSA):** A method that allows farmers to sell directly to the public by having consumers purchase a share in the season's crops. A basket of farm-fresh fruits and/or vegetables is delivered to a designated location each week by the farmer. The consumer then picks up his or her weekly allotment from that location.

**Compost:** A mixture of decaying vegetation and manure that is added to soil to provide more nutrients to plants.

**Distributor:** A business that supplies goods to stores or other businesses that sell to consumers. For example, a produce distributor purchases fruits and vegetables from a farmer and sells them to supermarkets, restaurants, or schools.

**Farm:** An area of land and buildings that is used for growing crops and raising animals.

**Farmers market:** A place where farmers sell their products directly to the public.

**Orchard:** A piece of land planted with fruit trees.

Fruits and vegetables are grown on farms and in orchards. Sometimes, these farms are thousands of miles away. For example, California grows about 80 percent of the fruits and vegetables sold in the United States. Florida and Washington are two other States that are large suppliers of fruits and vegetables. If you live in Ohio, this means that some of the fruits and vegetables you buy in your local supermarket have been shipped by truck over a long distance.

Increasingly, Americans are able to buy fruits and vegetables grown overseas in their local supermarkets. This allows us to enjoy fruits and vegetables that are not in season in our own country. These fruits and vegetables are often in transit from 1 to 2 weeks, however, so they may not be as fresh as produce that is grown closer to home.

Buying locally-grown fruits and vegetables also supports local farmers.

The trail that leads from farm to table can involve many routes. Farmers can sell their produce to wholesale distributors that truck fruits and vegetables from the farm to restaurants, supermarkets, and schools. Other options for farmers to sell directly to consumers include farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA).

Farmers markets may be found in many communities. Usually scheduled for once a week at specific locations, farmers markets provide an opportunity for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers.

Community supported agriculture is another way for farmers to sell directly to consumers. In this option, consumers purchase a “share” of the farmer’s produce for the season. Every week during the growing season, the farmer delivers a box of fresh produce for consumers to pick up at a designated location. Often, the consumer does not know what produce will be in the box each week, so it is a big surprise! Consumers can have the fun of learning new ways to cook vegetables that they haven’t previously considered or trying new types of fruits.

Farm to school is a way to connect schools (K-12) with regional or local farms in order to serve healthy meals using locally produced foods. Farm-to-school activities also provide small and mid-scale farms with new marketing opportunities and school children with the opportunity to learn how food is grown and harvested.

Farm-to-school activities vary from community to community; however, the basic goals are similar:

- To meet the diverse needs of school nutrition programs in an efficient manner;
- To support regional and local farmers and thereby strengthen local food systems; and
- To provide support for health and nutrition education.

Note these Web sites for more information:

*[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/  
knownyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knownyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER)*

*<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/Default.htm>*

## Answer Key for Student Handout 5.2

### Reading Comprehension Questions

- 1. Where are Terry and Sam going on their field trip?**  
To visit Farmer Brown's farm.
- 2. What are three vegetables that Farmer Brown grows on his farm?**  
Carrots, kale, potatoes, spinach, lettuce, beets, Swiss chard.
- 3. What are two fruits that Farmer Brown grows in his orchards?**  
Peaches and apples.
- 4. What are three things that vegetables need to grow?**  
Sunlight, water, nutrients, compost, worms.
- 5. Where are two places that Farmer Brown sells his vegetables?**  
Distributor, local schools, and farmers markets.
- 6. How do Farmer Brown's vegetables go from the farm to the supermarket?**  
A distributor takes them from the farm to the supermarket.
- 7. Where do fruits and vegetables come from?**  
Farms and orchards. Mystery solved!

### Answer Key for Student Handout 5.3.1

## Farmer Brown Does the Math

1. The school cafeteria needs 240 carrots to make enough carrot salad for all 200 kids in the school. Farmer Brown delivered 180 carrots on Wednesday. How many more carrots are needed?

Answer: 60 carrots

2. Farmer Lee sold 25 pints of strawberries at the farmers market. Farmer Garcia sold 38 pints. How many more pints did Farmer Garcia sell?

Answer: 13 pints

3. Eliza has \$20 to spend at the farmers market. She sees signs for the following:

- Spinach: \$3/bunch
- Lettuce: \$1/head
- Raspberries: \$5/pint
- Carrots: \$2/bunch
- Beets: \$3/bunch
- Peaches: \$4/pound
- Swiss chard: \$2/bunch

Eliza decides to buy 2 bunches of spinach, 2 pounds of peaches, a head of lettuce, and 1 pint of raspberries. Does she have enough money?

Answer: Yes. The cost of the fruits and vegetables is \$20.00.

4. Farmer Brown wants to sell his spinach to the supermarket. The distributor says it will have to charge him \$51 to ship the spinach to the store. Farmer Brown can sell the spinach to the distributor for \$100. How much money will Farmer Brown make?

Answer: \$49 in profit ( $\$100 - 51 = \$49$ )

5. Mrs. Jones wants to make beet chips with her class. The beets cost \$3/bunch at the farmers market. She needs 8 bunches of beets. How much will Mrs. Jones have to pay for the beets?

Answer: 8 bunches @ \$3 = \$24.

**Answer Key for Student Handout 5.3.2****Farmer Brown Does the Math**

1. The school cafeteria needs 240 carrots to make enough carrot salad for all 200 kids in the school. Farmer Brown delivered 3 cartons of carrots on Wednesday. Each carton holds 60 carrots. How many more cartons of carrots are needed?

Answer: 1 carton (60 carrots)

2. Farmer Lee sold 25 pints of strawberries at the farmers market. Farmer Garcia sold 38 pints. How many more pints did Farmer Garcia sell?

Answer: 13 pints

3. Eliza has \$20 to spend at the farmers market. She sees signs for the following:
- Spinach: \$3/bunch
  - Lettuce: \$1/head
  - Raspberries: \$5/pint
  - Carrots: \$2/bunch
  - Beets: \$3/bunch
  - Peaches: \$4/pound
  - Swiss chard: \$2/bunch

**What could Eliza buy for \$20?**

Answer: Various options, e.g., one of each item.

4. Farmer Brown wants to sell his spinach to the supermarket. The distributor says it will have to charge him 34 cents for every mile it trucks the spinach to the store. The closest store is 150 miles away. Farmer Brown can sell the spinach to the distributor for \$100. Will Farmer Brown make a profit? How much?

Answer: Yes. \$49 in profit ( $.34 \times 150 = 51$ .  $\$100 - 51 = \$49$ )

5. Mrs. Jones wants to make beet chips with her class. The beets cost \$3/bunch at the farmers market. Each bunch has four beets. There are 30 children in Mrs. Jones' class and she needs 1 beet per child. How many bunches does she need to buy? How much will Mrs. Jones have to pay for the beets?

Answer:  $30 \text{ children} / 4 \text{ beets per bunch} = 8 \text{ bunches}$  (rounded up from 7.5).  $8 \text{ bunches} @ \$3 = \$24$ .

## Student Handout 5.1

# Terry and Sam Solve the Mystery of Where Fruits and Vegetables Come From



Terry woke up one fine April morning as the sun rose. He jumped out of bed. His mother didn't even have to tell him that it was time to get up. He pulled on his clothes and ran downstairs to breakfast.

"How come you're up so early this morning?" asked Mom.

"We're going on a field trip today at school. I'm really looking forward to it," said Terry.

"That is exciting! Where are you going to go?" asked Mom.

"We're going to a farm where they grow carrots and potatoes and kale and... lots of other vegetables! We had a farmer come to our class to tell us about his farm. Today we're going to ride a bus into the country and go see it!" exclaimed Terry.

"Well, you'd better eat a good breakfast, then. You'll need lots of energy to explore the farm," said Mom.

Across town, Sam was staring at her closet. She was trying to figure out what to wear on the field trip. Her big sister Jo told her that she'd better wear something that she wouldn't mind getting dirty. There's lots of dirt on a farm. Sam



picked out some jeans and a T-shirt.

"Better wear some sturdy shoes, too," said Jo. "You'll be walking a lot in the fields at the farm."

When Terry and Sam got to school, they and their classmates squirmed in their seats while the principal read the morning announcements. When he announced that the 3rd and 4th grade classes were going on a field trip to Farmer Brown's farm, the class members cheered. As soon as the announcements were over, Mrs. Jones lined them up. They marched out to the waiting school bus.

It was a long ride to Farmer Brown's farm. The farm was deep in the country, miles away from the town where Terry and Sam lived. Once they got to the farm, Terry, Sam, and the other kids were happy to see Farmer Brown once again. He welcomed them to his farm.

"On our farm," said Farmer Brown, "we grow lots of different vegetables. We also grow peaches and apples in the orchard. Today, we're ready to start planting carrots, tomatoes, and squash. We've been waiting to plant them until the danger of frost was over. If it gets too cold at night, the frost will kill the baby vegetable plants. We need to wait until the weather is warm enough to help the vegetables grow from seeds into plants."

"On the other hand, we've already planted the vegetables that like cooler weather. Those include spinach, kale, beets, Swiss chard, and lettuce. So you'll be able to see those vegetables growing and you can help us pick

some, too. Let's go take a walk and see what we find."

Mrs. Jones and the students followed Farmer Brown down a dirt path to the fields on his farm.

"We're lucky it's a sunny day for our visit," said Mrs. Jones.

"Yes, vegetables need lots of sunlight to grow," said Farmer Brown. Turning to the children, he asked: "What else do vegetables need to grow?"

All the kids eagerly raised their hands. After all, they had all worked in the school garden and knew a thing or two by now about what vegetables need to grow.

"Water!" shouted Pedro.

"Nutrients from the soil!" called out Diep.

"Worms," suggested LaKeisha. "They keep the soil from getting too hard."

"Compost," said Jacob.

"Well, you're all right," said Farmer Brown. "Plants need sunlight, water, and nutrients from the soil. Compost helps make the soil rich. And worms keep the soil from getting hard."

"Where do you sell your vegetables, Farmer Brown?" asked Sam.

"We sell some of our vegetables to a company called a distributor. They sell the vegetables we grow to grocery stores. We also sell to local schools for the cafeteria. And we sell some of our vegetables at farmers markets," replied Farmer Brown.

"What's a farmers market?" asked Terry.

"A farmers market is a place where local farmers come once a week to sell their products to customers. We take our vegetables to a

farmers market in the city square. People come to the market to buy fruits and vegetables that they know are grown locally."

"So farmers markets are a good way to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. And you get to meet the people who grow them!" exclaimed Juanita.

"That's right. And farmers markets help local farmers stay in business, too," said Farmer Brown. "Farming can be hard work. Farmers need lots of ways to sell their vegetables. They like meeting the people who like to eat their vegetables, too!"

By now, the students had come to a big field. It had row after row of spinach plants, their leaves shiny in the sunlight. Farmer Brown gave each student a plastic bag. He invited each student to pick some spinach leaves to take home to their families. But first, he asked everyone to taste the spinach right after they picked it and then washed it under the water faucet in a corner of the field.

"How's it taste?" asked Farmer Brown.

"Hmmm.... yummy," said Juanita.

"It's kind of crunchy and warm," said Tony.

On the bus trip back to school, Sam asked Terry what he liked best about the trip.

"I liked tasting the spinach. I didn't think I was going to like it, but I did! So I'm glad that I can take some home for my family to have, too," said Terry. "What did you like best?"

"I liked meeting Farmer Brown again and seeing all his fields planted with vegetables. I'm going to ask my mom to take me to the farmers market so I can introduce her to Farmer Brown. I bet she'll like knowing where her spinach and carrots come from and the farmer who raised them!"

# Reading Comprehension Questions



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Where are Terry and Sam going on their field trip? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are three vegetables that Farmer Brown grows on his farm? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are two fruits that Farmer Brown grows in his orchards? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are three things that vegetables need to grow? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Where are two places that Farmer Brown sells his vegetables? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How do Farmer Brown's vegetables go from the farm to the supermarket? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Where do fruits and vegetables come from? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Farms, orchards, and gardens grow fruits and vegetables that help you grow and stay healthy.**



## Student Handout 5.3.1

# Farmer Brown Does the Math



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Farmers have to do more than just grow fruits and vegetables. They have to be business people, too, so they can get the vegetables they grow to people who want to buy them. Help Farmer Brown and his customers solve some math problems.

1. The school cafeteria needs 240 carrots to make enough carrot salad for all 200 kids in the school. Farmer Brown delivered 180 carrots on Wednesday. How many more carrots are needed?
2. Farmer Lee sold 25 pints of strawberries at the farmers market. Farmer Garcia sold 38 pints. How many more pints did Farmer Garcia sell?
3. Eliza has \$20 to spend at the farmers market. She sees signs for the following:
  - a. Spinach: \$3/bunch
  - b. Lettuce: \$1/head
  - c. Raspberries: \$5/pint
  - d. Carrots: \$2/bunch
  - e. Beets: \$3/bunch
  - f. Peaches: \$4/pound

Eliza decides to buy 2 bunches of spinach, 2 pounds of peaches, a head of lettuce, and 1 pint of raspberries. Does she have enough money?

4. Farmer Brown wants to sell his spinach to the supermarket. The distributor says it will have to charge him \$51 to ship the spinach to the store. Farmer Brown can sell the spinach to the distributor for \$100. How much money will Farmer Brown make?
5. Mrs. Jones wants to make beet chips with her class. The beets cost \$3/bunch at the farmers market. She needs 8 bunches of beets. How much will Mrs. Jones have to pay for the beets?

**Know your farmer. Know your food. Fruits and vegetables do not have to travel as far when you buy from local farmers. Farms can also be a great place to learn about where your food comes from.**

## Student Handout 5.3.2

# Farmer Brown Does the Math

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Farmers have to do more than just grow fruits and vegetables. They have to be business people, too, so they can get the vegetables they grow to people who want to buy them. Help Farmer Brown and his customers solve some math problems.

1. The school cafeteria needs 240 carrots to make enough carrot salad for all 200 kids in the school. Farmer Brown delivered 3 cartons of carrots on Wednesday. Each carton holds 60 carrots. How many more cartons of carrots are needed?
2. Farmer Lee sold 25 pints of strawberries at the farmers market. Farmer Garcia sold 38 pints. How many more pints did Farmer Garcia sell?
3. Eliza has \$20 to spend at the farmers market. She sees signs for the following:
  - a. Spinach: \$3/bunch
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  - c. Raspberries: \$5/pint
  - d. Carrots: \$2/bunch
  - e. Beets: \$3/bunch
  - f. Peaches: \$4/poundWhat could Eliza buy for \$20?



4. Farmer Brown wants to sell his spinach to the supermarket. The distributor says it will have to charge him 34 cents for every mile it trucks the spinach to the store. The closest store is 150 miles away. Farmer Brown can sell the spinach to the distributor for \$100. Will Farmer Brown make a profit? How much?
5. Mrs. Jones wants to make beet chips with her class. The beets cost \$3/bunch at the farmers market. Each bunch has four beets. There are 30 children in Mrs. Jones' class and she needs 1 beet per child. How many bunches does she need to buy? How much will Mrs. Jones have to pay for the beets?

**Know your farmer. Know your food. Fruits and vegetables do not have to travel as far when you buy from local farmers. Farms can also be a great place to learn about where your food comes from.**

# Garden Detective News



**Grow Healthy Habits With Your Children**

Find out where fruits and vegetables come from.

5



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



## Garden Detective News

This week, the garden detectives read a story about a class field trip to a farm. They learned how farmers sell their fruits and vegetables to the public. The class talked about how eating produce grown by local farmers has many benefits. For example, your food doesn't have to travel as far to reach you. Freshly-picked fruits and vegetables taste great! Buying local also supports farmers in your community.

Here are some ways to buy local produce:

- Visit the farmers market, if there's one in your community. At a farmers market, farmers sell their produce directly to consumers like you. Look for a farmers market near you at <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets/>.
- Stop at a farm stand, if you're driving in the country. Some farmers sell their fruits and vegetables at a stand near their farm.
- Take a trip to a local u-pick farm, where you and your family can pick your own fruits and vegetables.

- Buy a community supported agriculture (CSA) share. Local farmers sell shares in their crops at the beginning of the season, then deliver boxes of fresh produce each week to a designated location for pick-up. Find out more at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml>.

### Mystery Solved!

#### Ways To Help Your Child Eat More Fruits and Vegetables.

1. **Go food shopping with your children.** Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where fruits and vegetables come from. Let your children make healthy choices.
2. **Celebrate the season.** Use fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season—the fruits and vegetables in your detective's garden are in season! Check your local supermarket or farmers market for these fruits and vegetables. They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive.





## Questions:

1. How many different routes are there from Farm to Plate on the maze? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which route was the longest distance from the Farm to Your Plate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Which routes were the shortest distance from the Farm to Your Plate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ask your garden detective what he or she learned in school about where fruits and vegetables come from and the benefits of consuming locally grown fruits and vegetables.



**Know your farmer. Know your food. Fruits and vegetables do not have to travel as far when you buy from local farmers. Farms can also be a great place to learn about where your food comes from.**

Answer Key: 1. Four 2. Farm to the Wholesale Distributor to the Grocery Store to Your Plate 3. Locally grown fruits and vegetables from the Farm to Farmers Market, CSA Pickup, and School



## Lesson Extension: Investigate Sources of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

### Standards Addressed

#### English/Language Arts

Standard 1, Writing: *Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.*

Standard 1, Speaking and Listening: *Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 3/4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.*

Standard 3, Speaking and Listening: *Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.*

Standard 4, Speaking and Listening: *Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.*

#### Health

Standard 8, Advocate for Health: *Advocate for personal, family, and community health.*

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Advocate for working with local farmers to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

### Time Required

60 minutes

### Materials

- Paper
- Pens

### Preparation

- None.

### Instructional Process

#### STEP 1

**Discuss with students** the reasons why it is important for schools to work with local farmers to increase access to fresh local fruits and vegetables at school. Write their answers on the board, e.g.:

- Locally grown food can help schools provide balanced meals for kids.
- Linking school food offerings to local sources can help kids learn where food comes from.
- Supporting local farmers puts money back into the local community.

Remind students that farms, orchards, and gardens grow fruits and vegetables that help you grow and stay healthy.

**STEP 2**

**Brainstorm with students** different ways that the school community could work with local farmers. Write their answers on the board, e.g.:

- Starting a farmers market on school grounds where families could shop
- Having a farm-related fundraiser
- Looking for ways to use more locally grown foods in the lunch room

Then have students brainstorm possible barriers that might prevent the school community from working with local farmers.

Have students vote on a list of the top three activities that they consider desirable and feasible.

**STEP 3**

**Assign teams of students to interview** the school food service director, school administrators, their parents/caregivers, and other students about their level of interest in these activities. Work together to generate a list of interview questions, e.g.:

- Here are three ways our school could work with local farmers to make locally grown fruits and vegetables available to our school community:  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

- Which of these activities do you think would work best? Why?
- Which of these activities do you think would be hard to do? Why?
- On a scale of 1-5 where 5 is the highest, which activity would you personally rate the best?

**STEP 4**

**Have student teams compile the results of their interviews and present them to their classmates.** As a class, discuss which activity has the greatest community support.

**STEP 5**

**Have students write a letter to the school food service director,** Parent Teacher Association (PTA), or other school parents group, principal, and/or school board recommending the activity that has the widest community support. Students should list as many reasons as they can think of about why this is an important policy to adopt. You may wish to have students write a draft letter that you or a classmate can review and a final version that incorporates any needed corrections.

**STEP 6**

**Share the letters with the school food service director** or other appropriate policymaker(s) in your school.



## Lesson Extension: Visit the Farmers Market

### Standards Addressed

#### English/Language Arts

Standard 2, Writing: *Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.*

Standard 3, Speaking and Listening, Grade 3: *Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.*

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Describe a farmers market.
2. Conduct an interview.
3. Summarize findings.

### Time Required

30 minutes plus field trip

### Materials

- Paper
- Pens

### Preparation

- Identify farmers markets in your community. Start by checking this Web site: <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets/>
- Arrange transportation as needed.
- Invite parents to serve as field trip volunteers.
- Contact farmers market manager to explore existing learning opportunities at the market. Ask the manager:

- Where is the market? What are its operating hours?
- How many vendors are usually participating? Where are they from?
- How long has the market been in operation?
- How many people typically visit the market?
- When is the best time for your class to visit the market and interview farmers?
- Are there descriptive materials about the market that the class should review before its visit? How can you access them?
- Are there existing educational programs that the market sponsors that your class could participate in?

## Instructional Process

### STEP 1 Introduce the farmers market field trip.

Explain to students that they will have a chance to meet real farmers at the farmers market and to learn about how fruits and vegetables are grown and sold. This is a real chance to be a garden detective.

Remind students that farmers markets are great places to learn about where your food comes from, as well as good places to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables.



#### Ask students:

**Why would someone want to shop at a farmers market?** (To buy fruits and vegetables that are fresh and in season, to support local farmers, to discover new fruits and vegetables, to talk with farmers; etc.)

Share information about your local farmers market that your class will visit. Use the information you learned from the farmers market manager, such as:

- Where the farmers market is located
- What kind of vendors participate in the market and where they're from
- Interesting facts about the market, e.g., how many people visit the market, how long it has been in existence

**STEP 2 Assign students to work in pairs.** Each pair will be responsible for interviewing a farmer at the market. Working together, students should develop a list of five questions that they want to ask the farmers that they interview about their farm, how they get their fruits or vegetables to market, etc.

Tell students that as they get to know the farmer, they will learn more about the food we eat: “Know Your Farmer. Know Your Food.”

**STEP 3 Review interview questions.** Have students volunteer questions that their pair has come up with. Give student pairs an opportunity to add new questions to their list, based on ideas from others.

**STEP 4 Review good interviewing guidelines.** Brainstorm with students about good etiquette to use in interviewing farmers. For example:

- Don't interrupt a farmer who is busy serving customers.
- Ask politely if the farmer is willing to answer a few questions.
- Say thank you after the interview.

**STEP 5 Visit the farmers market.** On field trip day, have students visit different farmers' stands in the farmers market. Student pairs should interview individual farmers with their questions. Decide on procedures in advance: Students could take turns asking questions or one student could ask the questions and the other could take notes.

**STEP 6 Have students write a summary.** After the field trip, have each student write a summary of what he or she learned in the interview as a homework assignment.