

A New Flavour to Food?

We are at a critical point environmentally and our planet's inhabitants are facing huge challenges from a changing climate. It is vital to be able to all do something to help that will make as positive an impact as possible.



It is estimated that 20% of the UK's carbon footprint is linked to food. This increases to 30% when considering the impact of deforestation to grow much of this food. This is a huge area that we can make significant changes to and reduce our climate impact.

Nitrous oxide, which is released when chemical fertilisers are added to the land, is about 300 times the strength of CO₂ as a climate gas. Often an excess of fertiliser is used, more than the plants can absorb. Alternatives to chemical fertilisers include using manure or planting cops in rotation, which is common practice in organic farming.

We waste an incredible amount of food, much of which is very climate intense to produce in the first place. 20% of meat is wasted globally, which is crazy when it has such a high climate impact to produce. In the UK, milk is the 3rd most wasted foodstuff and we throw away about half a billion pints of it!

Growing certain foods out of season in hot houses can create a huge carbon footprint due to the heating needed. Do we really need to eat strawberries at Christmas?

Then there is the clearing of forests for growing food like palm oil, cocoa, sugar and soya.

Your challenge is to research different foods and their impact on our climate. Which are the best and which are the worst? Are there any easy switches that we could make? Using this information try and create a Climate Friendly cookery book that could be sent home or sold at your school fete. You may want to experiment with some of the recipes; maybe each class or eco-committee member could try one of them at home?

Alternatively, you could try and send home a new recipe each week and see how many people have a go over the weekend.

Maybe we could all be a little more climate savvy when we make our food choices.

Please let us know if you take part in a challenge by emailing eco-schools@keepwalestidy.cymru or tweeting @EcoSchoolsWales