**What are the food miles in my Christmas Dinner?**

The topic of food can provide a great starting point for exploring the global dimension.

Having studied globalisation and global fashion with a Year 9 group, the class discussed how global trade affects the food we eat and how this links with interdependence of trade. As it was coming up to Christmas, we decided to look at the issue of food miles.

Pupils were given background information about what food miles were, then for the main task had to calculate the food miles in a typical Christmas Dinner.

Pupils were given two menus with the ingredients for each course, and the place/country of origin of the ingredients. One menu was sourced from within Britain (as much as is possible) and the other from all over the world. Pupils then used the internet to calculate the distance each of the ingredients would travel to get to school (for example, students used sites such as the AA Route Planner for Britain). Once calculated, comparisons were made between the food miles of both menus, the advantages and disadvantages of this, and its impact on global trade.

**This project helped students achieve the following...**

* Gain an understanding of the issues behind where we get our food. For example, importing food has advantages, as it widens our choice of foods and can lower the price through competition. However, negative impacts include an increased carbon footprint through transport, linking to climate change; and issues around sustainability related to what food is produced in Britain versus what food is imported.
* In doing the activity, pupils achieved a sense of the scale of the area our food travels from, evaluated the impact of food miles, and made links to globalisation.

**This project also raised the following challenges...**

* The activity was well structured, and the main obvious problems were in the required accessibility to ICT to complete the task.
* Pupils also needed background in globalisation and specifically information about food miles as they were unfamiliar with the concept.

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| **Find out more...** | |
| Food miles or fair miles? | The complex issue of 'food miles' is explored in more depth in 'Fair Miles',( <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/fair-food-miles-recharting-the-food-miles-map-115389>) a free downloadable PDF from Oxfam/IIED.﻿ |
| Teaching resources | » <http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/resources/search/?top=44> |
| Local support | If you are inspired by this case study and would like to do something similar in your school, or are looking for ideas for developing the global dimension, why not contact your nearest [Development Education Centre](http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/localsupport/)?﻿ Global Education Derby is your local DEC! |

