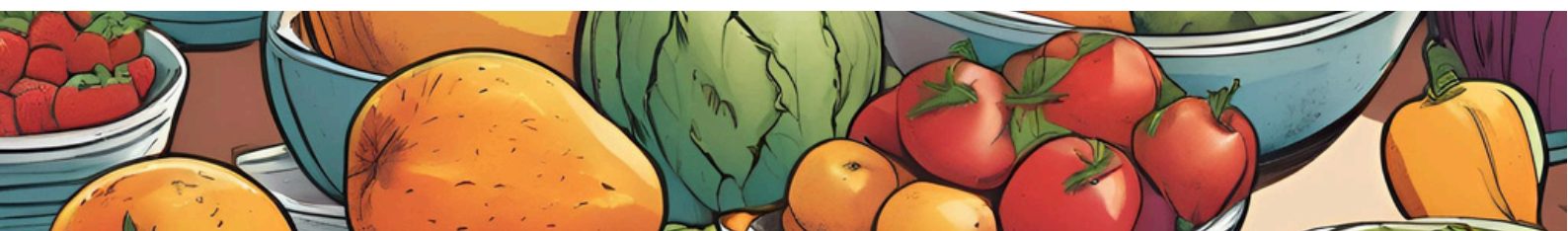




# Food

## Sustainability Audit

This guide will help you actively observe your surroundings by zooming in on Food in your school grounds. Go out, explore, identify and start your Eco-School actions!



# EXPLORE FOOD WITH ECO-SCHOOLS

Sustainable diets focus on healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods produced with care for people and the planet. They emphasise fresh, nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and legumes. Unlike industrial farming, which harms soil, biodiversity, and the climate, sustainable methods such as permaculture, organic farming, and agroforestry help restore ecosystems and build resilience. Choosing more plant-based proteins also supports food security and reduces climate impacts.



Your Eco-Committee can choose to focus on the theme Food, or explore several themes at once. Forming sub-groups within the committee ensures continuity, with each group taking responsibility for a specific theme and developing expertise over time. Use the Eco-Schools Seven Steps to explore and weave the theme throughout every part of your school.

## SOME QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED...

### Local Practices

- What local sustainable food is available in our school/community?
- What local farming practices support sustainable diets?

### Impact on Health and the Environment

- How does our food impact our health and the environment?
- How much of the food consumed at school is produced locally and organically?

### Making Healthier and More Sustainable Choices

- What steps are we taking to make our diet healthier and more sustainable?

### Food Waste

- How much food is wasted, and how can we reduce it?



Challenge assumptions, slow down, and really observe your surroundings. Your school has its own unique challenges and solutions that only sharp, curious minds will discover. Record what you see - notes, sketches, photos, or simple counts - at different times and seasons.

Ask critical questions: *What's here? What's missing? Why is it like this? What could change?* Use these insights to understand the current situation and move towards high-impact actions for Food at your school.



## Food Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<b>Food choices</b>		
Look at food packaging in your canteen or packed lunch, how far have some items travelled to get to you?		
Are there any local farms, markets, or community gardens that grow or sell food near you?		
Does your school canteen use any local or seasonal produce?		
Does your school stock products that have labels such as “organic”, “Fairtrade”, or “locally sourced” on the food served or sold?		
What is the estimated percentage of organic/ local/ fairtrade/ sustainable/ vegetarian or vegan ingredients purchased by the school out of the total food ingredients?		
How healthy are the meals that students are having at school?		
What actions, policies or campaigns does the school have to promote healthy eating choices.		
Does the school currently work with parents to promote healthy and sustainable food choices for packed lunches or meals at home?		



## Food Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<b>Production</b>		
Who is responsible for preparing and cooking the food at school?		
Where do most of the ingredients come from ?		
What is the total area cultivated for growing vegetables, herbs, or fruit at the school?		
Is your school growing fruit, vegetables, or herbs? If yes, where are they growing, and who looks after them?		
What kinds are grown?		
Record your harvest - what is the approximate weight of each type of vegetable/fruits harvested each year?		
<b>Meals</b>		
Observe the food served at your school, does it look and smell fresh? What clues do you notice about how it was made?		
What types of meals are offered in the canteen? Are there vegetarian or vegan options?		
Does the school promote any 'meat-free' days? How many per year?		
<b>Waste</b>		
What happens to leftover food after lunch?		
Which types of food seem to be wasted most often?		



## Food Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
Set up a bucket where you collect all the food waste throughout one school day. How much food waste your school produces each day (in weight)?		
Count the total number of food and drink items consumed during one school meal. Record how many items have packaging and how many are unpackaged.		
Are there separate bins for food waste, recycling, compost and general rubbish?		
Does your school have any food waste policies in place?		
Does your school have any policies to reduce food packaging waste?		
<b>Community</b>		
Are there any community meals, food-sharing projects, or local markets nearby? If yes, who takes part in them?		
Does everyone in your school/community have enough to eat?		
What traditional or regional foods are popular where you live?		
What types of agriculture do you notice in your surroundings? <input type="checkbox"/> large fields <input type="checkbox"/> single crops <input type="checkbox"/> mixed planting <input type="checkbox"/> smaller pots <input type="checkbox"/> machinery		

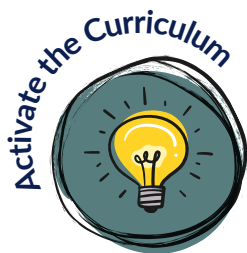


# Food Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<b>Your questions</b>		

# Choosing *Food* as a key theme for action?

## Follow these next Eco-Schools steps...



What knowledge or skills do you still need to start putting your ideas into action? Take some time to identify what's missing and discuss it within your Eco-Committee. Then, reach out to your teachers and tell them what you'd like to learn more about, whether it's consequences of industrial food systems, how to reduce food waste or understanding the benefits and implications of sustainable eating. Together, you can build the knowledge and confidence needed to start real change!

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Use what you've learned from your lessons, your Eco-Schools activities, and your own observations, work together to turn your ideas into real change by creating an Action Plan for Food. Mobilise your Eco-Committee, teachers, school staff, parents, and the wider community to help you reach your goals. You could:



organise cooking workshops



plan vegetarian/vegan days



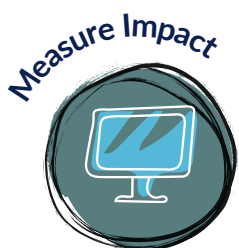
ensure organically sourced products



start a school garden

Whatever actions you choose, make sure they are realistic, measurable, and long-lasting, so your Eco-Committee's work continues to grow year after year.

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Monitor your actions to see the difference you have made! Use your Action Plan to check what's changed in your school and community. Have you recorded vegetarian/vegan days? Are more people aware of the benefits of locally sourced products? You could compare before-and-after dietary plans, count freshly harvest produce, or note how many people joined your activities. Measuring your impact helps you celebrate success and plan even better actions for the future!

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Make sure the whole school and local community are part of your Food journey. Share your findings and actions through assemblies, newsletters, posters, or social media. Invite teachers, students, parents, and local experts to join activities or share their knowledge. By including different perspectives and experiences, your Eco-Committee will build stronger, more creative solutions that last.