



Food Waste Reading Comprehension

Worldwide, 30% of food is lost or wasted – that's 1.6 BILLION tonnes of food every year! This averages out to 614 kcal per person every single day, about the same as 10 medium eggs or 21 large carrots! But what does this have to do with climate change?

In this activity, your students must read the passage about food waste and climate change before answering the comprehension questions.

Answer key

1. How many kcal worth of food many large carrots does humanity waste on average per person per day? How many large carrots is this equivalent to?
614kcal, equivalent to 21 large carrots

2. Food losses occur before the food actually reaches supermarkets. What are some examples of food loss?

Acceptable responses include:

- Crops damaged during harvesting
- Food that reaches its sell-by date before being sold
- Food rotting because there is nowhere cool to store it
- Death of sick livestock.
- Should not include 'throwing food away because it is ugly'.

3. Is food loss and food waste similar in different countries? Why or why not?
High-income countries tend to see more food waste in the consumer stage as people and supermarkets dispose of 'ugly' looking foods. Low and middle-income countries tend to see more food loss due to a lack of proper infrastructure or communication amongst suppliers.

4. What are some ways that we can reduce food loss from the supply chain?
Using more durable packaging can make food last longer when in transit. Improving communication throughout the supply chain to ensure supply meets demand can also reduce food loss.

5. Is packaging food good or bad for the environment? Why?
Good, because it can reduce food waste as it can make food last longer, but bad if it's not recyclable, or if it is not disposed of correctly.





6. Storage is a big cause of food loss in low and middle-income countries. Why can't we just give everyone fridges?

Fridges require electricity or fuel to run, which may not be easily accessible in some regions. Fridges are also quite expensive.

7. What can individuals do to reduce food waste?

Only buy what you need; cook with leftovers; compost your food waste; research ways to make your food last longer, such as storing carrots in water; have an 'eat me first' box in your fridge with soon to be expired foods; buy wonky/ugly fruit and veggies at the supermarket; raise awareness!

We welcome feedback and would be delighted to hear your thoughts on this activity. Feel free to send an email to schools@climatescience.org and we'll be sure to get back to you soon :)

