

DIGGING DEEPER: RESEARCHING GREEN FOOD PRACTICES

We have been reading and learning a lot about four green food movements: organic foods, eating local, urban gardening, and free-range farming. We've learned about some of the history of these food trends, and we've explored the benefits and disadvantages of each movement. Let's take it one step further and do some independent research into some of the issues we learned about in these books.

Choose one of the following topics brought up in the Growing Green series to research on your own. You can start your research with the books we've read, but you'll need to find other sources of information too. Look for useful information in books, or conduct online searches to find articles, videos, maps, and other sources that will help you find the answers you need. If you're having trouble getting started, take a look at the Selected Bibliography and Further Information sections at the back of each book in the Growing Green series, where the authors have listed articles, books, and websites containing interesting and useful information about the topics introduced in the books. Make sure you keep track of your sources, so that you can provide a bibliography later!

FOOD DESERTS

Food deserts are defined as areas that lack access to healthy, fresh food because of a shortage of grocery stores and other food providers. In these locations, people's nutrition options are limited to processed, unhealthy convenience foods. Conduct some research on food deserts in your area, and write a short essay that answers the following questions:

- Where are the food deserts in your city or state?
- What is being done by local organizations or government officials to make healthy food more easily available to people in these areas?
- What can ordinary citizens do to improve their community's access to healthy, fresh food?

GREEN SCHOOL LUNCHES

In an effort to improve kids' nutrition, many schools across the country are moving away from serving highly processed, fat- and sugar-rich foods and are instead working to include more fresh, healthy foods in their school lunches. This often involves changing lunch menus to feature more locally grown produce. Do some research into how schools are making these changes to their lunch programs, and write a short report that answers these questions:

- What methods can schools use to change their lunch menu offerings to include locally grown produce?
- Aside from lunches being healthier, what are some other benefits of including locally grown foods in lunch programs?
- What are some ways that students can get involved in improving their school's lunches?

**THESE ACTIVITIES ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING
COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:**

RI.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.7

Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

W.6.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.6.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

