

THE EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT

EXPLORING ORGANIC FOOD AT A GROCERY STORE

Summary: Organic is a multifaceted and complex subject! It can be helpful to examine the topic from a few lenses to pull out some of this complexity. One important lens is a student's own experience. In this lesson, students will investigate the organic food options that are available to them in their neighborhood.

Materials

- [Grocery Store Organic Food Exploration](#) worksheet (attached below)
- A pen or pencil

Vocabulary

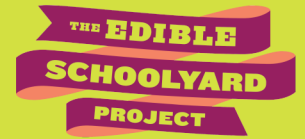
- **Food accessibility** refers to how effectively people can get and eat food when they are hungry. A person's access to food is shaped by many factors, including the cost, geographic location, and availability of a food; their allergies, cultural needs, and dietary preferences; and their access to transportation, time, and equipment like stoves and refrigerators that allow them to get, prepare, and eat food.

Teacher Notes:

- If you would rather teach this in the classroom, you can ask students to bring in products from home or bring in a variety of products and teach this lesson through examples. Students can also browse online grocery store listings.
- This lesson asks students to visit a grocery store. It's good practice to encourage students to check-in with their parents or guardians to get permission to go on their own or have them go with a trusted adult.
- This lesson is a great opening for broader discussions around accessibility of organic food and conversations around health. See [Resources of Articles for Extensions](#) for ideas on how to broaden the exploration.
- This lesson was developed for Edible Schoolyard Project's [Understanding Organic](#) curriculum and is part of the extension inquiries.



EXPLORING ORGANIC FOOD AT A GROCERY STORE



WRITE: Answer the questions below about your personal and family relationships to organic.

1. Think about your relationship with organic food. Do you or your family eat food labeled organic? Why or why not? What are some of the reasons your family purchases organic food? What are some of the reasons they don't?

2. What questions do you have about your family's relationship to organic?

EXPLORE: Go on a tour of a grocery store that is within a short distance of your home, or that you shop at regularly. Bring this worksheet to guide your exploration.

WRITE: Fill out the Grocery Store Organic Food Exploration worksheet (attached below)

REFLECT: Answer the following questions about your experience exploring organic food in the grocery store.

1. Is organic food accessible for you? What about your neighbors? Explain your reasoning and give examples from your exploration to support your claims. *(Hint: you may consider the availability and cost of the food, how near or far it is from where you live, how suitable it is for your dietary and/or cultural needs and preferences, the preparation required to make it ready to eat, etc.)*



EXPLORING ORGANIC FOOD AT A GROCERY STORE

2. What questions do you have about your family's relationship to organic?

REFLECT: Consider the ways you might connect to and join the work of improving accessibility to organic food. Use your [Circles of Connections](#) worksheet to answer the following questions:

- Is organic food accessible to you? Your community? The broader community? Explain your answer.
- How does the level of access you have to organic food impact your life? (ie. If it is not accessible to you, how does that impact your life? If it is accessible to you, how does that impact your life?)
- How does the issue of food access impact your community? Your broader community?
- What are ways organic food can be made accessible to you, your community, and the broader community?



GROCERY STORE ORGANIC FOOD EXPLORATION Student Worksheet

Name: _____

Answer

Based on your observations at the grocery store, answer the following questions.

1. Take some time to notice the different items at the grocery store. What do you notice? You may consider some of the prompts below.
 - What kinds of foods are available at this store?
 - What kinds of non-food items are available?
 - How is the store organized? How are items arranged?
 - Are prices easily visible? Is there any other information about the products on display?
 - Describe the overall store environment—what can you see? Smell? Hear? Feel? Taste?

Map

Draw or write your answers. You can also map out what you see in the grocery store.



GROCERY STORE ORGANIC FOOD EXPLORATION Student Worksheet

Name: _____

Explore

1. Now find some food products, vegetables, and fruit that are labeled “organic”.
 - Where is the organic food located in the store? (ie. in the front, the back, mixed in with all the other food, etc.)
 - What do you notice about the organic food in general?
 - Are there many organic options? Few?
 - Does it look fresh or appealing?
 - How can you tell it is organic?
 - How does the organic food compare to the non-organic food?
 - What other observations can you make?
 - If the grocery store doesn't have any food labeled organic, why do you think this might be? Support your answer with specific observations from the store.

Map

Draw or write your answers. You can also map out what you see in the grocery store.



GROCERY STORE ORGANIC FOOD EXPLORATION

Student Worksheet

Name: _____



Item One	Non-organic	Organic
Item Name:		
Price:		
Origin (where was it grown?):		
Write down keywords from the package:		
What are some interesting observations about the item? (Appearance, packaging, etc.):		

Directions: Choose one item (fruit or vegetable) that is available in both the organic and non-organic produce sections. Compare the organic and non-organic versions.



GROCERY STORE ORGANIC FOOD EXPLORATION

Student Worksheet

Name: _____



Item Two	Non-organic	Organic
Item Name:		
Price:		
Origin (where was it grown?):		
Write down keywords from the package:		
Ingredients:		

Directions: Check the rest of the store for organic labels. Fill out the table below for one item with organic labels. Can you find a non-organic that is equivalent to this item? If so, write down information for that item.