

Imported Food Safety

Name _____

Activity #1: Where does your food come from?

With a partner, examine the food items. Discuss the following questions.

1. Where do these foods come from?
2. Where did you find this information?
3. Who makes sure that foods in the U.S. are safe to eat?

Activity #2: Global Food Trade Webquest

In our increasingly global economy, agricultural products are regularly imported and exported between countries. To ensure the safety of food products in the U.S., several government agencies play a role with the process of food safety. Go to the web address:

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/about/federal/index.html> and answer the following questions about how our food supply is kept safe.

1. What are three federal government agencies responsible for protecting our food supply and what are their duties regarding food safety?

Imported Food Safety (continued)

2. Which agency would be responsible for ensuring the safety of the following food items?

- A carton of eggs _____
- Bananas _____
- A burrito from a fast food restaurant _____
- A steak purchased at the grocery store _____
- A hamburger from the school cafeteria _____
- Honey _____
- Baby formula _____

Read the fact sheet “Boost to Food Safety Funding Would Benefit Public Health and Food Producers” (<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2015/03/boost-to-food-safety-funding-would-benefit-public-health-and-food-producers>) from The Pew Charitable Trusts, March 20, 2015.

3. The FDA is asking for how much additional federal funding to enact legislation that will help protect our food supply?

4. What are the top three ways the FDA proposes to spent this increase in funding?

- _____
- _____
- _____

5. What is the name of the legislation?

Read the article “New Rules Make Companies Do More to Police Imported Food” (<http://nyti.ms/1kTdpsf>) from the NY Times, November 13, 2015.

6. What do the new rules require from food importers?

7. How does the FDA propose that food importers meet the new requirements?

8. What percent of the American food supply is imported?

Imported Food Safety (continued)

9. The produce rule includes requirements for what four aspects of growing, harvesting, packing, and storing produce?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Activity #3: Safety Challenges of Importing Food

Read the statements below. Mark an X if you believe the statement is true or false.

True	False	Statement
		Honey is included in many items I eat on a regular basis.
		Consumers in the U.S. consume approximately 2 million pounds of honey each year.
		All honey in the U.S. is produced by domestic beekeepers.
		Bread, cookies, energy bars, and snack pastries are regularly made with honey.
		All countries require producers, packers, and food processing companies to follow strict regulations regarding the buying and selling of honey.

Read the article "Food Detectives on a Tough Case" (<http://nyti.ms/1ujlb1r>) from the New York Times, January 19, 2015.

Answer the following questions and discuss with a partner.

10. What federal agency is working to test the make-up and country of origin of honey?

11. How much honey in the U.S. is imported from other countries?

Imported Food Safety (continued)

12. What is a tariff? Why is there a tariff on Chinese honey being imported into the U.S.?

13. Why was Chinese honey being relabeled as coming from other countries prior to being imported?

14. How accurate have the lab's tests been in determining the country of origin?

15. Give a brief description of how the lab is currently testing the honey's country of origin.

16. Protecting the safety of our nation's food supply is an important societal concern. Do you think the new safety legislation and improved laboratory techniques to detect unsafe aspects of our food supply will help to protect our nation's food supply? Why or why not? Should something more be done? If yes, what do you propose? If no, how does the current system address food safety concerns?

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Activity #1: Where does your food come from?

With a partner, examine the food items. Discuss the following questions.

Either provide food items from the grocery store with Country of Origin Labels (COOLs) or provide images found in the PowerPoint presentation.

1. Where do these foods come from?
Answers vary depending on what is provided to students.
2. Where did you find this information?
Answers vary depending on what is provided to students.
3. Who makes sure that foods in the U.S. are safe to eat?
Answers may vary—the idea is just to get students thinking and to evaluate their prior knowledge.

Activity #2: Global Food Trade Webquest

In our increasingly global economy, agricultural products are regularly imported and exported between countries. To ensure the safety of food products in the U.S., several government agencies play a role with the process of food safety. Go to the web address:

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/about/federal/index.html> and answer the following questions about how our food supply is kept safe.

1. What are three federal government agencies responsible for protecting our food supply and what are their duties regarding food safety?
 - **U.S. Department of Agriculture:** The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged.
 - **U.S. Food and Drug Administration:** The FDA is charged with protecting consumers against impure, unsafe, and fraudulently labeled products. FDA, through its Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), regulates foods other than the meat, poultry, and egg products regulated by FSIS.
 - **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** The CDC leads federal efforts to gather data on foodborne illnesses, investigate foodborne illnesses and outbreaks, and monitor the effectiveness of prevention and control efforts in reducing foodborne illnesses

Imported Food Safety (continued)

2. Which agency would be responsible for ensuring the safety of the following food items?

- A carton of eggs ___ **USDA** _____
- Bananas ___ **FDA** _____
- A burrito from a fast food restaurant ___ **CDC** _____
- A steak purchased at the grocery store ___ **USDA** _____
- A hamburger from the school cafeteria ___ **CDC** _____
- Honey ___ **FDA** _____
- Baby formula ___ **FDA** _____

Read the fact sheet “Boost to Food Safety Funding Would Benefit Public Health and Food Producers” (<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2015/03/boost-to-food-safety-funding-would-benefit-public-health-and-food-producers>) from The Pew Charitable Trusts, March 20, 2015.

3. The FDA is asking for how much additional federal funding to enact legislation that will help protect our food supply?

\$109.5 million

4. What are the top three ways the FDA proposes to spent this increase in funding?

- **Strengthen food safety oversight capacity and coordination with state and local authorities**
- **Retrain FDA inspectors**
- **Increase safety of food imports**

5. What is the name of the legislation?

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)

Read the article “New Rules Make Companies Do More to Police Imported Food” (<http://nyti.ms/1kTdpf>) from the New York Times, November 13, 2015.

6. What do the new rules require from food importers?

The new rules require the food importers to police the food they import.

7. How does the FDA propose that food importers meet the new requirements?

The FDA wants food importers to hire third-party auditors to check the safety of the food in foreign facilities.

8. What percent of the American food supply is imported?

22% of our food supply is imported.

Imported Food Safety (continued)

9. The produce rule includes requirements for what four aspects of growing, harvesting, packing, and storing produce?
- water quality
 - employee health and hygiene
 - manure use
 - compost use

Activity #3: Safety Challenges of Importing Food

Read the statements below. Mark an X if you believe the statement is true or false.

True	False	Statement
X		Honey is included in many items I eat on a regular basis.
	X	Consumers in the U.S. consume approximately 2 million pounds of honey each year.
	X	All honey in the U.S. is produced by domestic beekeepers.
X		Bread, cookies, energy bars, and snack pastries are regularly made with honey.
	X	All countries require producers, packers, and food processing companies to follow strict regulations regarding the buying and selling of honey.

Read the article “Food Detectives on a Tough Case” (<http://nyti.ms/1ujlb1r>) from the New York Times, January 19, 2015.

Answer the following questions and discuss with a partner.

10. What federal agency is working to test the make-up and country of origin of honey?
Customs and Border Protection (part of Department of Homeland Security)
11. How much honey in the U.S. is imported from other countries?
70% of honey in the U.S. is imported.

Imported Food Safety (continued)

12. What is a tariff? Why is there a tariff on Chinese honey being imported into the U.S.?

A tariff is a tax placed on goods that are imported into the country. Chinese honey was subject to a tariff after American beekeepers complained that Chinese honey producers were selling their honey for artificially low costs.

13. Why was Chinese honey being relabeled as coming from other countries prior to being imported?

Since the tariff was only placed on Chinese honey, this could be avoided by relabeling the honey as coming from a different country. The buyers were trying to avoid paying the tariff.

14. How accurate have the lab's tests been in determining the country of origin?

In 2008, their tests were about 90% accurate in being able to determine country of origin for honey imported from Thailand, the Philippines, and Russia.

15. Give a brief description of how the lab is currently testing the honey's country of origin.

A sample is diluted and pumped into a mass spectrometer. A nebulizer turns the sample into a fine mist and sprays it over heated argon. This gives the lab a distinct signature of trace elements (sort of like a fingerprint of the elements found in the sample). The elements are measured at very low levels and the combination is compared to a reference database of known elemental "fingerprints". The researchers look for a match.

16. Protecting the safety of our nation's food supply is an important societal concern. Do you think the new safety legislation and improved laboratory techniques to detect unsafe aspects of our food supply will help to protect our nation's food supply? Why or why not? Should something more be done? If yes, what do you propose? If no, how does the current system address food safety concerns?

Accept all reasonable answers.