

## *Before the Plate*

### **Reflective Writing Prompts**

**Farm Laborers:** During the segment about potatoes, you will be introduced to a migrant farm worker named Patrick from Jamaica. He explains that he leaves his family to earn money in order to take care of his wife and kids. Throughout the movie you will see many farm laborers hard at work in addition to Patrick. Reflect on the following questions:

- Is farming easy? Are some foods more labor intensive than others? Why?
- How do migrant farm workers help our food supply? Why might someone desire to be a migrant farm worker?
- How can technology and robotics impact the future demand for farm laborers to produce our food?

**Animal Welfare:** During the beef and dairy segments of the film, you will be introduced to the farm-to-fork process of beef and milk.

- What evidence do you see of good animal welfare practices?
- What practices in livestock production could be easily misunderstood by someone unfamiliar with livestock?
- How can farmers and consumers be better educated about livestock production?

**Agricultural Literacy:** While visiting the cattle finishing feedlot (during the beef segment), Jeff discusses the average size of farms. He mentions the modern trend of having fewer farmers to produce food for a growing population. He also mentions that fewer and fewer people are knowledgeable about agriculture and the production of their food.

- Why is it important to be literate about agriculture?
- How can farmers do a better job of educating consumers?
- How can consumers do a better job of educating themselves about farming practices?

**Agricultural Lifestyle:** Throughout the film, you will be introduced to many farmers. The wheat farmer mentions that farming is more of a lifestyle than a job.

- How might a career in agriculture be different than careers in other job sectors? Or is it?
- In your opinion, what would be the pros and cons of a career in agriculture?
- If you were to choose a career in agriculture, what would it be and why?

**Food Waste:** During the segment at the carrot farm, they discuss carrots that are misshaped. They mention that when we go to the produce section of the grocery store, we only see perfectly shaped and sized produce.

- Why would consumers only want to eat produce that is perfectly shaped? Or do they?
- What is the cost to the environment to discard imperfect fruits and vegetables?
- What are your ideas to use cosmetically imperfect fruits and vegetables?

**Hybrid and GMO Seed Varieties:** During the sunflower segment, the farmer will explain that he uses specific hybrid varieties of seed and why. The dairy farmer will also explain why he uses genetically modified corn seed to grow the feed for his cows.

- What measures are taken to ensure these varieties of seed are safe?
- Why are they beneficial for farmers to use?
- How does the application of science improve the production of food?