

Name _____

Date _____

Supermarket “Hunt”

The goal of this trip to the supermarket is not to buy food, but to find out where that food comes from and at what price to the environment. **Note: You may have to ask a supermarket worker for help figuring out where some of the produce comes from.**

Product	Origin: if from the USA, designate state	Producer & labeling (who makes the product, any special labels ie organic, free range)	Price	Distance Traveled	CO2 emissions	Buy it? Yes/No
Apple						
Apple-organic						
Banana						
Banana-organic						
Chicken breasts						
Chicken breasts - natural or organic						
Milk						
Milk-organic						

Now, calculate the distance a food product traveled by entering the manufacturer’s information into a mapping service, such as www.mapquest.com . If you don’t have a city but only a state, just put in the state abbreviation; the service will take you to the state capital. If your food item comes from a country, find the capital of that country from our location in New York.

1. Divide the distance in miles by 6, the average miles per gallon for a tractor trailer truck.
2. Then, multiply this figure by 22.2 pounds, the average amount of carbon dioxide emitted by a tractor trailer burning diesel (passenger vehicles burning gasoline usually emit around 19.4 pounds per mile). This will yield a conservative figure, since we won’t factor in distances traveled by airplane or boat, but, this will give us a good idea of the amount of CO2 emitted for our everyday food purchases.

Example: Let’s say an apple travels 2000 miles. The truck gets 6 miles/gallon, so I divide 2000 miles by 6 miles/gal to get 333 gallons of fuel needed. Then, I multiply 333 gallons by 22.2 lbs/gal to get 7400 pounds of carbon dioxide emitted from this journey.

After completing the calculations, reflect on what you discovered. Were you surprised with any of the distances that food travels? What do you consider important when purchasing food? Attach an explanation of your reasons for writing yes/no in the last column.