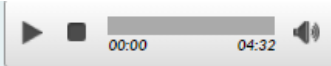


Listen to the recording and for questions 1-10, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.



Food miles

Mark Mitchell says that food miles measure how far food travels from 'field to (1) fork':

The UK imports (2) ninety per cent of its fruit.

Some consumers are worried that food transported by air is contributing to rising (3) global temperatures.

Some UK supermarkets used a (4) sticker showing an aeroplane to help shoppers make informed buying decisions.



'Locavores' are people who buy (5) locally grown fruit and vegetables if they can.

Critics of the concept of food miles say it is too (6) simplistic and does not help shoppers.

From the month of (7) June it is more environmentally-friendly to import apples from New Zealand to the UK.

As well as food miles, we need to consider the time of year food travels and the (8) form of transport used.

There are (9) one million Africans working in the business of supplying fruit and vegetables to the UK.

Kenyan farming methods do not include the use of (10) tractors or chemical fertilisers for growing green beans.

Mark Mitchell

Thanks mainly to concerns about climate change, the term 'food miles' has entered our vocabulary. Food miles tell us how far food travels between the place where it is grown or produced and the place where it is eaten – in other words, the distance from 'field to fork'. Go into any British supermarket nowadays and you might find pears from Argentina, grapes from Chile, strawberries from Spain or tomatoes from Saudi Arabia. In fact, around forty-five per cent of the vegetables and **ninety** per cent of the fruit eaten in the UK comes from abroad. These figures are a cause for concern to those consumers who want to reduce the negative effect of their everyday lives on the environment. Why? Well, because much of our imported produce arrives by plane and air travel is responsible for giving off large quantities of gases such as carbon dioxide, which, as we know, is a major cause of rising **global temperatures**. Indeed, at one point, in response to consumer demand, and in order to warn shoppers of the possible environmental impact of what they were buying, some supermarkets began putting a **sticker** of an aeroplane on produce flown in from abroad. Many people would refuse to put any food with one of these aeroplanes into their shopping basket, particularly so-called 'locavores', who avoid, if possible, any produce which has been imported, preferring instead to buy **locally grown** fruit and vegetables, and meat from nearby farms. As well as doing their bit for the environment, locavores will tell you that locally grown food is much healthier than imported food, which can lose important vitamins on long journeys.

But do we really need to be quite so worried about the distance our food travels? Some experts now say that the whole idea of food miles is too **simplistic** and therefore unhelpful to environmentally conscious consumers. Take apples for example. British apples are picked from

September to October. Some are sold fresh and the rest are kept in cold storage for use throughout the year. This is fine, initially, but keeping apples cold uses a lot of energy, and this of course creates those carbon emissions which are so bad for our planet. From June onwards, then, it becomes kinder to the environment to start shipping apples from New Zealand. Similarly, in summer, you can eat British lettuces with a clear conscience. But in winter, the energy needed to grow lettuces in heated greenhouses in Britain is greater than the environmental cost of importing them from Spain.

del camp a taula

notice the pronunciation of 'pears' /'pɛər/, not /piər/

notice how we pronounce 'tomatoes' in British English as opposed to American English UK:/tə'mɑ:təʊ/ US:/tə'meitəʊ/

'everyday' → adjective

produce → *producte agrícola*

do one's bit: contribuir a la causa

throughout: *de principi a fi*

from 'x' onwards: *de x endavant*

notice the pronunciation of 'lettuce': /'letɪs/, not /'letus/
greenhouse: hivernacle

So it's not only a question of how far food travels but when it travels. And also, of course, how it travels, because the **form of transport** used makes a big difference. For example, food transported by sea is considered by some experts to be better than that which is flown in, because sea transport produces fewer carbon dioxide emissions.

Quite apart from environmental considerations, though, there's also the fact that **one** million people living in Africa are employed in the trade supplying fresh fruit and vegetables to the UK, a business which is worth several million pounds. If that business came to an end, many people in a number of African countries would be affected. This includes Kenya, which exports green beans to the UK at times when these are no longer in season here. 'Environmentally unfriendly,' say some. 'Not at all,' say others, because Kenyan farmers do not use **tractors**, and they use natural rather than chemical fertilisers, so their growing methods are far less polluting than in Britain.

The concept of food miles, then, is not wrong, it is simply incomplete as it does not consider the total energy used during the growing, transportation, production, storage and distribution of what we eat.

Not ... , but when... : 'but' means 'sinó' if there is a 'not' in the previous clause.

to be flown in: *que es fa arribar per aire*

notice we do not pronounce the <i> in 'fruit'