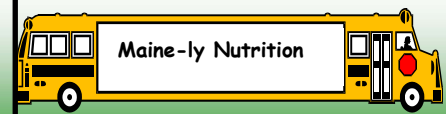


Maine-ly Nutrition Info Sheet

Using Maine Foods in the Classroom

January 2005



Why is it important to use “locally grown”?

- ✓ Food is fresher and may be more nutritious
- ✓ Food has not been exposed to as much handling and processing as food “from away”
- ✓ Less time between harvest and consumption
- ✓ Food is more likely harvested when ripe, rather than allowed to “ripen” as it is being shipped
- ✓ Food harvested when it is ripe has more nutrients than food that is not ripe when harvested
- ✓ Using local Maine food decreases transportation costs as well as energy and pollution
- ✓ Using local Maine food keeps dollars in the local economy, especially in supporting smaller family farms



Did You Know?

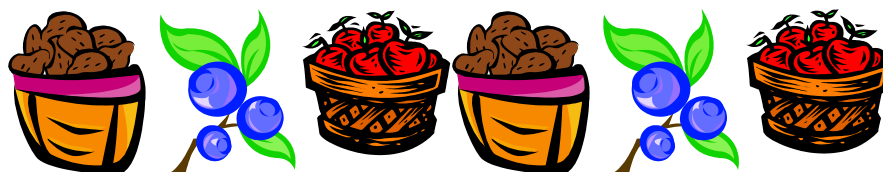
The Maine Organic Farmers and Growers Association has estimated that if we were to purchase \$10 dollars worth of Maine foods each week, it would add up to \$200 million staying within the Maine economy rather than flying southwest to warmer climes.

How can I set this up in my classroom?

- ✓ Identify fruits and vegetables that are local and may be sold in supermarkets, farmers’ markets, or farm stands. Investigate what time of year they are available. **Hint: use the handy enclosed chart to help you!**
- ✓ Identify fruits and vegetables sold in your local supermarkets that have come from out-of-state or foreign countries. Your supermarket is required to provide you with “country of origin” lists. Or you can use the US agriculture map at: www.usda.gov
- ✓ Have your students construct a list of fruits and vegetables they commonly consume. Which of these are available locally? How can they find out?
- ✓ Did students identify some locally grown products that they would like to try in class? Perhaps they could compare some locally grown products with some “from away” and see if they can taste a difference.

Other Ideas

- ✓ Organize a “Maine Foods” party in your classroom
- ✓ Invite a local farmer, rancher, or farmers’ market grower into the classroom to speak to the students about how they produce their products and where and how they sell them.
- ✓ Have your class coordinate with the school cafeteria and local food producers to sponsor a “Maine Foods Day.” The Maine Department of Agriculture has information about how this has been done in the past. (Contact Deanne Herman at: deanne.herman@maine.gov)



The information on this sheet is adapted from “Healthy Foods from Healthy Soils: A hands-on resource for educators”
Tilbury House Publishers, 2003