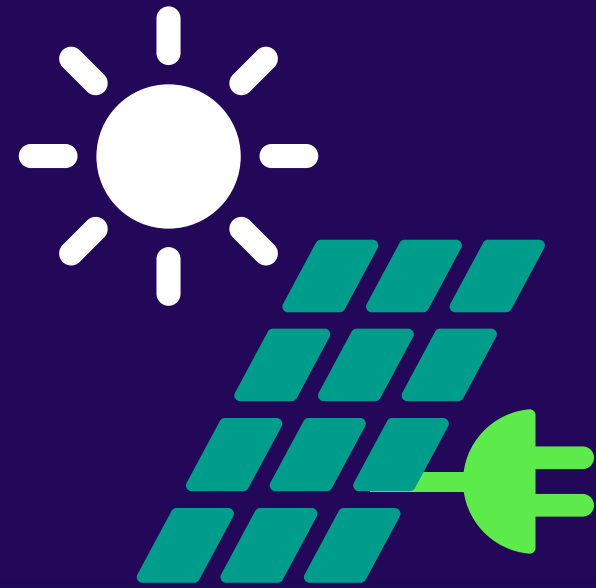
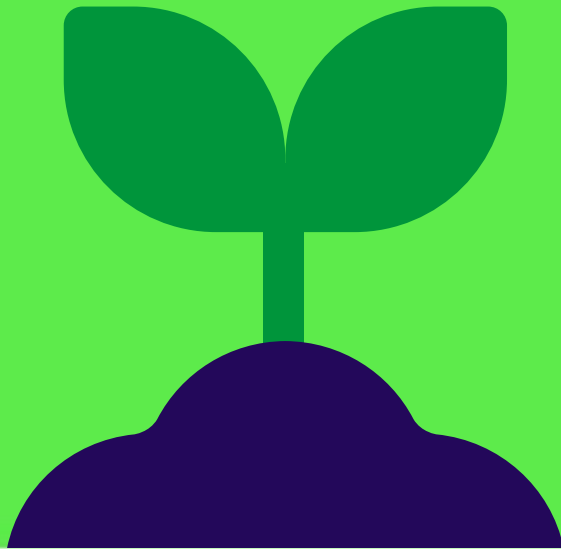




The Climate  
Connection

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# Farming and the environment

Classroom presentation



# Learning outcomes

During and after the lesson, learners will be able to demonstrate they can:

- make an argument from a perspective they may not agree with
- participate in a discussion where agreement needs to be reached
- understand and use key vocabulary around environmental issues.



# Background information 1

Farming is perhaps the most important industry across the world, for example globally about 700 million hectares are used to grow our food. But there are two significant problems for global farming in the 21st century that we need to keep in mind as we understand more and more about environmental issues.

Farming has changed a lot over the years as it develops in order to produce the food we need, and some of these changes have been disastrous for the environment.

Climate change has made farming more difficult in some locations.



1. How can farming damage the environment? Think about animals, chemicals and cutting down trees, for example.
2. How does climate change make farming difficult? Think about water and temperatures, for example.



## 1. How can farming damage the environment? Think about animals, chemicals and cutting down trees, for example.

- Animals produce methane, chemicals such as pesticides and fertilisers are dangerous for the environment, cutting down trees increases carbon in the atmosphere and farming can endanger the habitat of many animals.

## 2. How does climate change make farming difficult? Think about water and temperatures, for example.

- Climate change can influence rainfall patterns, so farms can have too much rain (floods) or not enough (drought), and higher temperatures can kill some plants and trees.



# Useful language 1

1. animal welfare	A. small animals, such as insects and worms
2. antibiotics	B. many different kinds of plants and animals
3. biodiversity	C. pushed down by someone or something
4. bugs	D. animals are usually kept inside with very little space, so that they produce more meat or milk
5. endangered	E. the natural home environment of a plant or animal
6. factory farm	F. an animal or plant that may disappear, for natural or human reasons
7. fertilisers	G. looking after animals properly
8. forced down	H. medicines used to manage infections
9. habitat	I. chemicals used to increase the productivity of plants or vegetables



# Useful language 1 answers

1. animal welfare	G. looking after animals properly
2. antibiotics	H. medicines used to manage infections
3. biodiversity	B. many different kinds of plants and animals
4. bugs	A. Small animals, such as insects and worms.
5. endangered	F. an animal or plant that may disappear, for natural or human reasons
6. factory farm	D. animals are usually kept inside with very little space, so that they produce more meat or milk
7. fertilisers	I. chemicals used to increase the productivity of plants or vegetables
8. forced down	C. pushed down by someone or something
9. habitat	E. the natural home environment of a plant or animal





# Useful language 2

Define the following:

- human food chain
- killed humanely
- methane
- nitrous oxide
- organic
- pesticides
- species





- **human food chain** – the connection between the plants and animals that we eat
- **killed humanely** – animals that are killed for food do not suffer as they die
- **methane** – a gas found naturally under the earth or the seabed and also produced by animals
- **nitrous oxide** – a chemical compound that is a large cause of global warming
- **organic** – farms or foods that have no artificial chemicals used in them
- **pesticides** – chemicals used to kill insects and other bugs on farms and to protect plants
- **species** – a basic classification of an animal or plant type, such as a black bear



You are going to work in groups of eight and hold a meeting.

Your teacher will give you a number between one and six. Each number represents a different role.

Your teacher will tell you who the chairperson and the note-taker will be.

**Chairperson** – you are responsible for keeping control of the meeting and making sure everyone has an opportunity to speak.

**Note-taker** – you are responsible for making sure all of the key points are written down.

Role 1: Traditional farmer

Role 2: Organic farmer

Role 3: Animal welfare worker

Role 4: Environmental activist – eco-warrior

Role 5: Public consumer

Role 6: Supermarket



## The meeting

Each role should speak for a maximum of two minutes, explaining their position on farming, food and the environment.

The chair must keep control and ensure everybody speaks, while the note-taker must be sure that all the key points are written down.

## Agreement

After everyone has spoken, you have 15 minutes to reach agreement on the group opinion and to prepare statements for the note-taker to present to the whole class.

The chairperson must ensure that they all agree and that everyone has spoken.



# 1: Traditional farmer

You believe the following:

- We need pesticides to kill insects and bugs.
- We have to use fertilisers to give the soil more nutrients to grow more food, and faster.
- We are a big industry – in 2019, 27 per cent of the global population worked in farming (World Bank figure).
- In the next ten years, food demand will increase by 35 per cent – we need to meet the demand.
- The prices we get for our food are forced down by the supermarkets and merchants. We need to produce more to live.

**In the meeting try to persuade:**

- the organic farmer and the environmental activist that sometimes we need to use pesticides to kill bugs and that we need fertilisers because the demand for food is growing all the time
- the supermarket to pay you more for the food it buys from you.



## 2: Organic farmer

You believe the following:

- We need to feed people, but we must protect the environment and natural resources for future generations.
- We need to protect biodiversity and endangered species – chemical use and the destruction of their habitats must stop.
- We cannot depend upon pesticides – we can manage bugs and insects in more natural ways, as previous generations did.
- We must give animal welfare a priority.
- We shouldn't destroy trees; we should plant trees. The trees remove carbon from the atmosphere.
- We should farm organically, without fertilisers and other chemicals.

**In the meeting try to persuade the traditional farmer that:**

- preserving biodiversity must take priority to protect different species
- we can manage bugs without chemicals
- animal welfare must be the most important part of food production, even if it makes food more expensive.



# 3: Animal welfare worker

You believe the following:

- We should treat our animals well – with good living conditions, food and water
- We should eat less meat – animals damage the environment with methane and nitrous oxide.
- We should keep our animals outside and not in factory farms.
- We must be sure that our animals are killed humanely.
- We should not transport live animals over long distances or to other countries.
- We need to educate people that animals that are cared for make better meat.

**In the meeting try to persuade everyone that:**

- meat-eating needs to be reduced for environmental reasons and there are alternatives to eating meat.
- animal welfare is more important than the cost of food in shops.



# Role 4: Environmental activist – eco-warrior

You believe the following:

- We should eat less meat – animals damage the environment with methane and nitrous oxide.
- We need to help farmers to use fewer pesticides and fertilisers – these add poison to the human food chain.
- We need to encourage people to eat locally produced food – food that is imported has a larger carbon footprint.
- We need to reduce water pollution levels from farmers – this kills fish and vegetation.
- We need to encourage farmers to protect wildlife and not destroy trees – trees remove carbon from the atmosphere.
- We need to reduce the use of antibiotics for farm animals – these can get into the human food chain.

**In the meeting try to persuade:**

- the traditional farmer to dramatically reduce the use of pesticides and antibiotics
- the public consumer to eat locally produced food and to reduce how much meat they eat.





# Role 5: Public consumer

You believe the following:

- We want good-quality food at affordable prices.
- We prefer meat from animals that have been cared for, but only if it is affordable to buy.
- We think the environment is important, but we also want affordable food.
- We want a choice of different foods all year, even if it is imported from other countries.
- We want food from healthy animals.
- We think vegetarian food is boring and not tasty enough.

**In the meeting try to persuade:**

- the traditional farmer to prioritise animal welfare
- the supermarket to sell more exciting vegetarian food
- the supermarket to keep its prices low.



# Role 6: Supermarket

You believe the following:

- We want to sell the food as affordable as possible to our customers.
- We know that some customers are more worried about price than about animal welfare.
- We will import more affordable products from other countries if our customers want them.
- We will happily sell less meat if customers demand vegetarian food.
- We know that organic food is more expensive, and most customers won't pay for it.

**In the meeting try to persuade:**

- the public consumers that you will sell more vegetarian food if they ask for it
- the organic farmers to sell you food that is more affordable
- everyone that you are 100 per cent committed to animal welfare in the meat you sell.





# Farming and the environment



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