Garden Learning Unit:

“Eat Food, Mostly Plants”
Overview

• Purpose: to study the role of plants in our diet
• Worked with Meg, our CitySprouts garden coordinator
• Studied, sketched, and harvested our own school’s vegetables
• Investigated the concept of food “value”: cost, health, environmental impact
• Visited a local farmer’s market and chain supermarket to conduct research
• Also convened an Expert Panel featuring local farmers, chefs, and activists
Students wrote a “Local Food Guide” with information about the importance of eating locally and seasonally, and with descriptions of plants that are available seasonally in our area.
The Value of Food
by Eliza and Margaret

Nutrition plays a big role in food value. Nutrition is how healthy our food is. A 100g serving of McDonald’s French fries has 316 calories and a lot of fat! Too many calories and too much fat isn’t good. Fruits and vegetables have a good amount. Sugar is also bad for the body. It causes weakness. Most junk food has sugar. Processed food is no good. It has a lot of chemicals and is made on dirty machines. Farmers Market food is not processed. Processed food also has too many ingredients. Most extra ingredients are bad chemicals. A fruit or vegetable from the Farmers Market has only one ingredient - itself! The more healthy your food is, the more energy it will give you.

Not only is industrial food bad for our bodies, but it is not good for the environment either. When food travels across the country in large trucks the gasoline pollutes the air. Food production uses about 10% of the energy in America. Toxic chemicals put on plants are very bad for the people, animals, and the earth. It’s very important to eat green.
Outcomes

- We shared our local food guide at a community breakfast featuring student-made, all local ingredient “Morning Glory” muffins.

- Students also wrote “action plans” outlining changes they wanted to make in their own diets to increase the amount of local, seasonal fruits and vegetables they eat.
Karen:

Please congratulate your students on a brilliant final project. The art was fantastic and the understanding of the issues far beyond what I'd expect to see from third-graders. You've got a talented class there. Thanks for sharing the work, and please wish them my best.

Michael Pollan