

FOOD JUSTICE LEAGUE: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

by Chelsey, Jessica, and Jiro

DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNICATION INTERVENTION

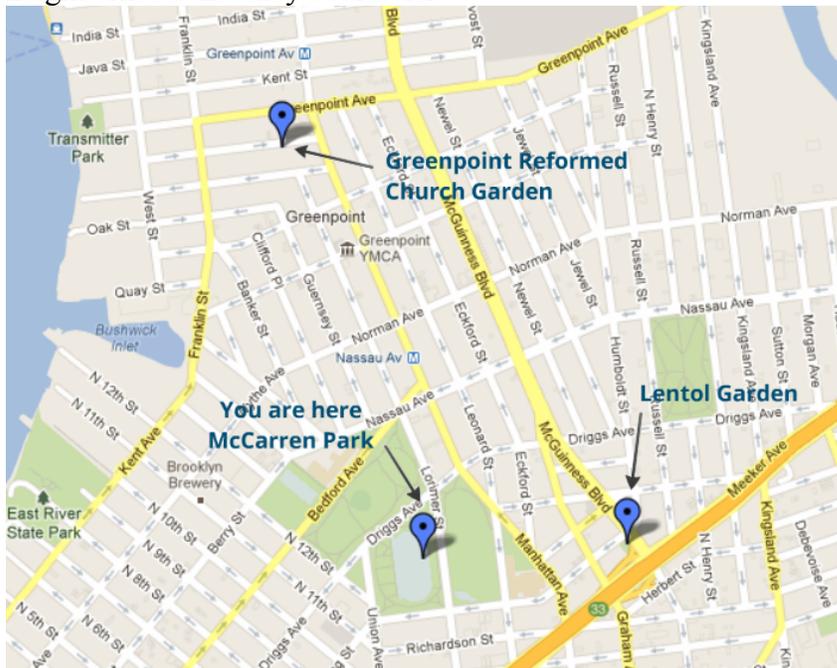
For our environmental communication project, we chose to focus on the topic of food justice, which “seeks to ensure that the benefits and risks of where, what, and how food is grown, produced, transported, distributed, accessed and eaten are shared fairly” (Gottlieb and Joshi). We wanted to address the social, economic and environmental injustices that manifest themselves daily within the food system, according to Julian Agyeman’s definition of just sustainability, or “the effort to fuse concerns for environmental sustainability and issues of race, class, gender, and social justice to ensure a ‘just’ and sustainable future for all” (Cox 16).

Having established our area of focus, we started to map out ideas. Personal experience had taught us that education was highly effective in changing attitudes and behavior, as it is an institutionalized and systematic method of imparting information that makes us question our values and actions. We also knew that we wanted to focus on children as our target audience, because we feel that habits and preferences are internalized during childhood. Because injustices are often caused by a lack of accessibility to resources or information, we thought that the best way to eliminate these inequalities would be to provide resources to those in need of them. We considered partnering with an urban farm to provide schools in disadvantaged areas with fresh, sustainably produced food as well as conducting a workshop for the children in these schools, where we would talk with them about how they can adopt sustainable eating habits. However, we soon realized that the scale on which we were attempting to execute our plan was too large for our limited time frame and resources. In addition, the organizations that we reached out to, Added Value and the Brooklyn Food Coalition, were not responding to our inquiries.

We decided to simply create a curriculum to be distributed to potentially interested youth organizations and educational institutions for a workshop for children ages seven to ten that addresses sustainable eating habits. Our curriculum consisted of five parts: an introduction, a section detailing the health risks of processed and fast food, a vegetable identification game, a section that addresses the industrialization of the food system and how growing your own food can help alleviate the injustices within the system, and a conclusion. We reached out Mary Leou at NYU Steinhardt’s Environmental Conservation Education department and Wallerstein Collaborative for suggestions on how to obtain the resources necessary for piloting the workshop and for recommendations pertaining to organizations that may be interested in our workshop. Wallerstein Collaborative ended up providing us with a budget with which to obtain the resources we needed to carry out a pilot workshop. Mary Leo found us an audience at an YMCA after school program in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

On December 5, 2012, we were able to conduct the pilot workshop. We created a [Prezi](#) to help the children visually understand the messages we were trying to convey. In our

neighborhood that they could visit.



We then showed them how easy it could be to grow their own food by giving them basil seeds to plant and take home with them.



We concluded the workshop with a Q&A session and a post workshop survey.

Subsequent to our workshop, we sent out emails (see appendix, section v) to youth, food, and educational organizations. The email briefly explained the workshop curriculum and the process and the execution of the pilot workshop as well as provided them with the informational resources to conduct the workshop themselves. We have a website, to which we have uploaded handouts, visual aids, and links to videos that would help the program instructors to teach kids about sustainable eating.

We had two strategies: one was to create a curriculum for a sustainable food workshop to be distributed to youth organizations; the other was to actually carry out the workshop in order to demonstrate how effective the curriculum is and to see what aspects need to be modified (this will help establish legitimacy).

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION

In his book *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*, Richard Cox defines environmental communication as “the pragmatic and constitutive vehicle for our understanding of the environment as well as our relationships to the natural world; it is the symbolic medium that we use in constructing environmental problems and negotiating society’s different responses to them” (20). According to Cox, environmental communication’s pragmatic function is instrumental and represents a call to action; it “educates, alerts, persuades, mobilizes, and helps us to solve environmental problems” (20). Its constitutive function is to construct and frame our perception of our relationship with the natural world using particular language and images, in order to influence our actions in a subtler and more transformative manner (20-21).

In terms of our project, we hoped to change the way that children think about the food they eat through pragmatic and constitutive means. The pragmatic aspect of our project is our use of the educational process and the dissemination of knowledge to expose children to the benefits of sustainable eating habits and the risks of eating processed foods. The constitutive aspect of our project is the way that we framed our workshop. We hoped to get children to rethink their relationship with food by using an engaging and interactive approach, with the goal of establishing an implicit connection between these fun activities and the values that we presented along with them. In her article, “Socializing Taste”, Elinor Ochs writes an ethnography about the socialization of taste that occurs early on in an individual’s lifetime. She studied several Italian and American families and their eating habits to determine how much a child’s environment impacts his or her taste. She found four distinct differences between American and Italian gastronomical tendencies, demonstrating that taste is socialized at a young age. This article supports our theory that eating habits are formed during childhood, and alternatives to commercial agriculture must therefore be presented to children while they are young if they are to have the best chance of being seriously considered.

Our workshop's main visual aid was our Prezi, whose link you can find above. We used simple and recognizable images to convey more complex, value-laden messages that we were trying to impart. We juxtaposed the insipid image of the Big Mac, overshadowed by its lengthy list of unpronounceable ingredients, with a bucolic representation of colorful vegetables, whose real-life versions we then gave to the children to taste.

We then talked to them about the industrialization of the food industry, drawing off of the social and cultural construction of what is "natural" and "unnatural" - modifying the DNA of fruits and vegetables is unnatural and is therefore "bad," whereas food that you grew yourself at a local community garden or on your windowsill is natural and is therefore "good." By ending the workshop with a hands-on activity culminating in a deliverable in the form of a plant that they could physically bring home with them, we invoked the romanticization of simple living by repeating how easy it was to grow your own food.

Another aspect of our project in which we utilized environmental communication was in our handout that we gave to the children, which you can view [here](#). Again, we used colorful images and simple language to present useful information regarding the benefits of eating certain fruits, vegetables and herbs. We hoped to counteract the popular perception among children that vegetables are "gross" by including how tasty they could be if they are prepared in the right way.

Our project worked towards a goal and an objective using a particular strategy and multiple tactics. Our goal differs from our objective in the sense that the former addresses the broader, overarching issue that we aim to tackle via our strategy. The latter refers the more nuanced lens through which we are working towards our goal, and is addressed by our tactics.

GOAL: To shift cultural focus from agribusiness to sustainable agriculture.

OBJECTIVE: To motivate children to adopt sustainable eating habits.

STRATEGY: To encourage educational institutions to adopt nutritional curricula that emphasize the ideals of sustainability.

TACTICS: To provide instructional resources for an educational institution to conduct a workshop for children ages 7-10 that addresses how food is produced, how it affects public health, and how it affects the environment; to conduct this workshop at an after school program in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

MECHANISM FOR CHANGE

When we expose kids to what is actually in their food (chemical preservatives in Big Macs, processed cheese on pizza [which happened to be the favorite food of a large number of workshop participants], GMOs) they start thinking about what it means to eat certain foods. The simple action of merely thinking about your food before you eat it can largely impact the way that you consume. We hoped to frame the act of food consumption in a way that makes kids realize how important it is to consider the implications of what it means to eat certain foods. Because it is hard to convince children to adopt sustainable eating habits for the sake of sustainability itself, we wanted to frame our workshop according to terms that we knew they could relate to. By showing them the questionable ingredients contained in processed foods, as well as showing them how good fresh fruits and vegetables taste, we hoped to encourage the children to eat in a more sustainable way under the guise of personal health and gustatory pleasure. Because these platforms are easy for children to relate to, they will then tell others about the things they learned, which will hopefully create discourse even within his or her family, which changes consumption habits. When we show them how delicious certain fruits and vegetables are, they will be more inclined to choose to eat them when they have the option (or ask their parents to serve them at home).

Although individual consumption habits do not, on a larger scale, effect change, our goal is to shift *cultural* focus from agribusiness to a more sustainable food production. In order to incite a cultural shift, we must target the values and identities of individuals, both of which are shaped at a young age. By conducting an interactive and hands-on workshop, in which the children are experiencing for themselves how easy it is to plant a seed and tasting how delicious a fresh, organic apple is, we allow the children to come to their own conclusions and thereby encourage them to identify themselves as individuals who relate to the values contained in the message of our workshop. If we are successful in shaping the way that our workshop participants relate to their food, we can then rely on the normalization of this type of outlook on the food system. Children are very impressionable, and are particularly influenced by their peers. A widespread normalization of sustainable eating habits will signify a cultural shift in attitude towards food production, which addresses our goal.

METRICS OF SUCCESS

We use both *transactional* and *transformational* metrics not only to evaluate the Food Justice League's success but also, more importantly, for starting up a conversation about what social change we want to see happen and what it will take to achieve these changes. According to Manuel Pastor, Jennifer Ito, and Rachel Rosner in "Transactions, Transformations, Translations: Metrics that Matter for Building, Scaling, and Funding Social Movements," *transactional* metrics "involve the quantifiable markers both internal and external to the organization," and *transformational* metric show both "how people, organizations, and movements have been altered through the collective efforts" and "how

societal and political views have been shifted or been impacted by movement building” (13). Transformational metrics are more qualitative than quantitative. That being said, the two are deeply related.

Our transactional metrics include the following: 1) an analysis of the results from the pre and post workshop surveys taken by the children during the pilot workshop, 2) comments made by YMCA staff members on the feedback questionnaire, 3) the number of inquiries about our workshop curriculum, and 4) the number of hits on our [website](#).

1) Pre and post workshop survey results (qualitative and quantitative): Based on the data we gathered from the pre and post workshop surveys, we found that the majority of children (17 out of 19) already liked vegetables before the workshop, and 11 out of the 17 of these children eat vegetables everyday. We also found that most children (15 out of 19) eat home cooked meals that generally consist of meat or poultry, grains (i.e. potatoes or rice), and a side dish of vegetables. We realized that not all of survey questions that we asked could supply us with significant data (particularly question one and three of the pre workshop survey). Out of the 19 children, only 12 filled out the post workshop survey, which affected how meaningful this data was in terms of interpreting our metrics of success. However, out of the 12 children who did fill out the post workshop survey, five said that they learned about new vegetables, fruits, and/or herbs. We reached a favorable outcome in terms of what the children said that they learned. Eleven out of the twelve children who took the post workshop survey said that they had learned something while only one child said that he learned nothing. Out of these eleven children, four children said that they learned about plants, four children said that they learned about GMOs, and three children said that they learned about processed foods and what is inside of a Big Mac.

In order for the evidence gathered from these surveys to be more sufficient, more workshops would need to be carried out so as to increase the amount of data compiled, thus increasing the viability of our methods.

2) Comments made by YMCA staff members on the feedback questionnaire (qualitative): We wanted a transactional way to measure the effectiveness and feasibility of our workshop, so we asked the Greenpoint YMCA staff to fill out feedback questionnaires after our performance to let us know how we did. We measured the staff comments qualitatively in order to learn, what those who work with children in an educational environment, think of our program, and how we can make our workshop more effective.

We read the feedback comments, and evaluated each response. From analyzing the content of the comments, we interpreted that the staff thought our hands-on activities were successful because the interaction engaged the children well, but we could have been more enthusiastic presenters.

The comments themselves, were not very helpful in helping us improve the quality of the workshop. Only one of the three staff members provided detailed feedback, the other two

were not very specific and pertained to us as performers, rather than the workshop itself. In hindsight should have been more precise with our questions. We could have asked more specific questions such as “What could be done to improve the curriculum and workshop?” rather than “What could we improve on?” This change in how the questions were worded would have provided us with more constructive feedback for how to improve the workshop and cater it more towards children’s interests, rather than how we should have spoken louder. We should have asked more qualitative questions about the workshop.

3) Number of inquiries about our workshop curriculum (quantitative): Based on the number of emails we receive back from our distribution, and corresponding follow through of use, distribution and implementation, we want to see how effective our tactic of providing material and a curriculum for youth and educational organizations and institutions, works towards our strategy, which is to get an organization(s) or institution(s) to adopt our workshop curricula or a curricula similar. We sent out a cover letter detailing our program proposal to nine different organizations, and so far have heard back from three, including the Lower East Side Girls Club, the Student Food Co-op at NYU and the 92 Y Residence Department. The 92 Y Residence Department has recently passed our email along to their Youth and Family Department, and we are waiting for their response.

4) Number of hits on our [website](#) (quantitative): We measured quantitatively the number of hits we received on our website, in order to determine the transactional number of people who are searching and visiting our website. The two publics that we have exposed to our site are the children for whom we performed the workshop and their parents, and the various educational, food and youth groups whom we sent our cover letter. Since our pilot workshop, we have had 33 views on our website. It is difficult to truly differentiate now where the traffic is sourcing from, that is which public is visiting the website, or if it is our own views that are generating hits. For future projects, perhaps having multiple target addresses on our website or another method of better differentiating where our traffic is coming from will make it easier to interpret the qualitative aspect of our results.

Our transformative metrics include: 1) measuring the impact that our workshop has had on the participants’ long term eating habits, 2) building community around sustainable eating within the institutions that choose to adopt our curriculum.

1) Children’s long term eating habits: We were able to measure the short term effectiveness of our workshop, by quantitatively evaluating what the children said that they had learned from our workshop in the post-workshop survey. The most common answer from children on what they learned from our workshop, was what GMOs were and the contents of fast food.

In order for us to measure how effective our tactic was at achieving our objective and goal, that is to motivate children to adopt sustainable eating habits and to shift cultural focus from agribusiness to sustainable agriculture, we would have to track each child’s eating and consumption habits after the workshop and through adulthood. This would

indicate whether or not if the children has adopted the values of the curriculum. Though ideal, for measuring the direct correlation between our tactic and our goal, this qualitative metric is just not feasible or physically possible with our limited resources.

2) **Building community:** Because our goal and objective involve cultural shifts, we would need a way to measure how prominent the discourse surrounding sustainable eating has become within the institutions that have adopted our curriculum. One way of measuring this would be to track the longevity of the program (which would be a quantitative metric), as this would indicate continued interest in the topic. If the program becomes an integrated part of the institution or organization, it would signify that there has been a cultural transformation regarding the way that nutrition is taught to children, at least within a designated network. We do not have the resources to carry out this measurement, as it involves a large time commitment, but it would be very helpful in terms of assessing how well our goal and objective have been met.

Furthermore, qualitative, transformative metrics that we, as group members, have experienced include: 1) Strong alliance building between group members, and 2) development of leadership skills.

1) **Strong alliance building:** Through the process of working closely on this project, meeting at least once a week outside of class for a few hours at a time, strong bonds were developed between each group member. Because discussion was facilitated constructively, rather than critically, we executed each step of the way efficiently, generated cohesive ideas collectively, formed a mutual understanding over new issues and shared work, and overall had a positive and enjoyable experience conducive to learning. The positive inner workings of our group allowed us to share a sense of belonging, community, and trust. The strong bond we formed as a small group enabled us to be involved, learn, and communicate each aspect of developing our communication intervention. We were able to transcend organizational interest for long-term collective interests, and shared an alignment of vision and purpose.

2) **Development of leadership skills:** Since the medium we chose for our communication intervention was a workshop, we were each individually able to develop our leadership skills and public speaking skills. All three of us now have the ability to clearly articulate problems concerning the food system, and we have a shared vision towards a solution, which can be seen reflected through our belief in our goal. We can have discussions with others about these topics so as to involve them in these issues. We now feel prepared and empowered to speak up about sustainable agriculture and food justice, which can be a useful tool that leads us in the direction towards action. We have become more aware of the complexity of problems regarding the food system, and are more likely to be active participants in future campaigns and efforts concerning sustainability in terms of food, health, nutrition, and agriculture. The positive recognition that we have received outside of our group, from Mary Leou at the Environmental Conservation Education department at NYU, YMCA staff members, parents and children from the pilot workshop, and our peers, have strengthened our convictions, which has thus increased our depth of engagement and willingness to take action in the future.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- The simplification of terms and issues that was necessary in order to effectively convey our message to young children
 - We ended up conforming to the binary of processed food = bad, organic produce = good, although the situation is clearly more complex than that. Because food justice is such a convoluted issue (wicked problem), we ended up doing more of a nutrition/sustainable-eating workshop, with the intention of bringing it to disadvantaged neighborhood.
- We had trouble holding the kids' attention. While this could be a fault of our curriculum design, we believe it is more due to the fact that none of us have been trained to teach children. Ideally, our workshop would be realized by an educator who can combine our knowledge of sustainable eating habits with their expertise in the field of education.
- Accessibility to resources that the children have beyond the workshop
 - We do not know how accessible local organic seasonal vegetables will be to each child beyond the scope of our workshop. This is dependent on a number of other factors such as the content of school meals, their parents dietary preferences, and their family socioeconomic status, that is the amount of money they are willing to spend determines what they are willing to buy. Because local and organic vegetables can cost more than what is provided in regular grocery stores, they are, unfortunately, not readily accessible for everyone.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Gaining access to institutions is hard, and you will probably need to ride the coattails of the legitimacy of other already-established institutions in order to get what you need. However, networking is key. Teaming up with other, more experienced and connected people makes the process so much easier and more effective.
- Think realistically. We started out with ideas for a project that was far too difficult to accomplish within our given time frame and with our limited resources. We ended up spending too much time thinking about how we could execute our elaborate plan rather than getting started right away on something that we knew we could accomplish.
- Focusing on the process, rather than the outcome, leads to more group cooperation. The process of deciding each step of the project as a group really allowed us to critically think about and learn every aspect of how to plan and execute our communication intervention. Most importantly, it developed our group communication skills and knowledge of managing group dynamics. While we each had a different background of expertise, we all had the same level of enthusiasm and understanding of our goal, and were able to work together cohesively, effectively, and most importantly, with a willingness to share and listen to each other's ideas.

SHOULD THIS PROJECT BE REPEATED? INSTITUTIONALIZED? SHOULD IT CONTINUE AFTER THIS COURSE?

Yes, we have created a curriculum that can be used to replicate our workshop. We put together a website that contains the visual aids that we used during our presentation, as well as more information about the subject and other organizations that interested groups or individuals can turn to should they want to get more involved. We compiled a list of educational, food, and youth organizations, including The Lower East Side Girls Club, Added Value, The Brooklyn Food Coalition, The Sylvia Center, 92 Y, and the NYU Student Food Co-op. We emailed each organization a copy of the curriculum and a link to our website, in the hope that our workshop will be adopted by several of these institutions and that our message will be disseminated to children throughout New York. We, the Food Justice League, along with the parents of the children who we tested out our workshop on, believe that our communication intervention should be institutionalized. This curriculum should become part of the curricula of public elementary schools across the United States.

APPENDIX

I. DRAFT OF WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

Given to the Environmental Conservation Education department at NYU Steinhardt along with a copy of our budget

Food Justice League Workshop

Duration: 45 minutes

Intended for children in grades 3-5 (ages 7-10)

This workshop is designed to educate children ages 7-10 about the benefits of sustainable eating habits, focusing on vegetable identification and seasonality, as well as the advantages of growing your own produce. This is important knowledge to impart to young children because eating habits and taste are socialized during childhood, and exposing them to the benefits of sustainable eating at a young age will increase the chances of them carrying these values into adulthood. By the end of this workshop, children should be able to identify vegetables based on when they are in season, recognize the health effects of eating processed foods, and be able to grow and care for a low-maintenance vegetable, herb or fruit plant. Along the way, students will learn the basics of the way the food industry operates and what it means to eat processed foods versus local and organic foods.

Part I: Introduction

- Introduce ourselves and why we're there
- The food we eat / how food gets made / what and how we eat affects our bodies, lives, and environment

Part II: Processed Foods

- The anatomy of a McDonald's hamburger
- Additives and chemicals in the burger
- Detrimental effects of these chemicals on the body
- Emphasize that it is hard to know what is in your food when you go out to eat

Part III: Game

- Vegetable, fruit, and herb identification
- To see how familiar children are with these naturally grown foods
- Award children with prizes (fruits)
- Emphasize seasonality and locality

Part IV: Agriculture

- Show video about agribusiness and GMOs
- Explain video
- Emphasize agribusiness versus sustainable agriculture (i.e. locally sourced, organic, seasonal foods)
- Growing your own food
- Each child gets to plant their own seed

Part V: Conclusion

- Summarize points
- Handout
- List further tools if children are interested in learning more

II. FOOD JUSTICE LEAGUE PILOT WORKSHOP SCRIPT (an expansion of the curriculum)

Chelsey Jiro *Jessica*

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Hi everyone! I'm *Jessica*, I'm **Chelsey**, and I'm Jiro... and we're the Food Justice League!
- **We are here today to talk to you about the food we eat, how food gets made, how what we eat affects our bodies, our lives, and our environment.**
- *Hand out survey*
- Please fill out this questionnaire, and we will collect them in a few minutes. Thank you!

Processed Foods (5 minutes)

- *Raise your hand if you like to eat fast food – burgers, French fries, tacos, pizza, McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, Taco Bell, Domino's*
- **Here is a McDonald's Big Mac. Let's take a look at what's inside. You might be surprised at what you'll find!**
- Look at all this stuff that goes into making the bun! Does anyone recognize any of these ingredients?
- *Now let's take a look at the special sauce.*
 - *Special sauce contains propylene glycol alginate, which is another food preservative.*
 - *It helps thicken the special sauce and makes the color stay bright and last longer.*
 - *It also found in laundry detergents, paint, antifreeze, and cigarettes.*
 - *Possible side effects of ingesting PGA include nausea, upset stomach, hair loss, rashes, and eye irritation.*
- **The beef patties**
 - **The cows are injected with growth hormones, steroids, and antibiotics so that they grow faster.**

Vegetables (10 minutes)

- Pull out vegetables and herbs from grocery bags and lay them out on a table
- "So, we are going to play a game! All of you can come up and choose a vegetable that you want."
- Hand out worksheet
- **"We're going to see how well you know your vegetables. If you're having trouble, you can take a look at your handout."**

- Go around the room and ask each child individually what s/he has chosen. Reward child with an orange, pear, or apple if s/he gets identifies his/her item correctly.
- If the child gets it wrong or does not know of the vegetable, fruit or herb that s/he was holding, then we will ask the child to hold up the fruit, vegetable or herb. We will then go on to ask the group if anyone knows what the item being held up is. Once the fruit, vegetable, or herb is identified, both the child who answered correctly and the child who picked out the item will get to choose a prize of a pear, apple, or orange.
- Once the game is over, we will ask the kids if they want to keep and take home the vegetable that they have. If they do not, then they should place it back in the grocery bags.

Agriculture (20 minutes)

- Show video
- Explain the video
 - *It is typically large companies that produce the food that you find in the supermarket*
 - *Some of these companies use genetically modified crops*
 - *just like we humans are made up of DNA, plants are also made up of DNA. Large companies sometimes change the DNA of crops so that they can grow in conditions that they naturally would not be able to.*
 - **It is not natural to grow the same crop, such as corn, wheat, or soy, on acres and acres of land. Because this is not natural, pests and weeds come and destroy a lot of these crops.**
 - **Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are plants whose DNA has been changed so that pests do not like the taste of the crops and weeds do not grow near them any longer.**
 - *When you eat these genetically modified foods, then there are health risks. For example, there has been a rise in food allergies since people have started eating GMOs instead of organic produce.*
 - *When a company creates a new gene for a plant, they can make it illegal for other farmers to use this seed. This gives them a lot of control over the way that food is produced. We currently have a situation where a very small number of companies have a huge amount of power over the food industry.*
- Q&A/discussion of video
 - **What did you think of the video?**
 - **Did you know about the information shown in the video before we watched it?**
 - **Does anyone have any questions?**
- You'll notice that the narrator suggested to buy foods that are labeled organic. But Alfalfa points out that plants don't have labels! It is very hard to know exactly what is in the food that you buy at the supermarket. One way that you can help to solve the problem of the food system while also making sure that you know what you're eating would be to support your local community garden.
- Community garden vs. a cornfield

- **There are community gardens close by that you can visit! (find community gardens)**
 - [Lentol Garden on Bayard Street \(about a 15 minute walk from YMCA\)](#)
 - [Eagle Street Farm on Eagle street \(about a 15 minute walk from YMCA\)](#)
 - [Greenpoint Church Garden on Milton Street \(only a few blocks away - 5 minute walk from YMCA\)](#)
 - [596 Acres - A project in the area with the goal of turning empty plots of land into community gardens](#)
- Potted plants - *Another way to help solve the problem would be to grow your own food. Here in New York, it might be a little hard to grow all of your food, seeing as most of you probably don't have a garden at home, but we are going to show you how you can grow a small plant in your own living room. When you grow and prepare your own food, you know exactly what you're eating. There will be no unwanted ingredients in your food.*
 - Give students plastic planters, soil and seedlings that they can grow themselves at home.
 - Tell students about what they foods can make using their plant and the nutrition benefits of the plant.

Conclusion and Handouts (5 minutes)

- Summarize main points
 - **Now you guys know more about the health risks of processed foods, the benefits of eating with the seasons, how to identify vegetables, a bit about how the food system works, and how easy it can be to grow your own vegetables.**
 - [We have some handouts for you to help you remember the health benefits of certain vegetables, how to take care of your plant, and some recipes that you can use to cook your basil.](#)
- Remind kids about the handout that contains the following:
 - Pictures of vegetables and short descriptions
 - Recipe with basil
 - How to take care of your plant
 - If you want to learn more, check out <http://foodjusticeleague.wordpress.com>
- Have kids fill out the post workshop survey
- Give feedback questionnaire to staff members

III. SURVEY DATA

Pre Workshop Survey Questions

- 1 Favorite foods
- 2 Do you like eating vegetables?
- 3 If so, which ones do you like?
- 4 How often do you eat fresh fruit or vegetables?
- 5 Describe what you usually eat for dinner in your household.

Post Workshop Survey Questions

- 6 What did you learn?
- 7 Did you discover any new fruits, vegetables, or herbs?
- 8 If so, which ones?
- 9 Where are you going to put your plant when you get home?
- 10 How often should you water your plant?

Feedback Questionnaire for the Staff

- 1 What are the strengths of our presentation?
- 2 What could we improve on?
- 3 In which ways was the teaching style appropriate for the kids? In which ways was it not?
- 4 How do you think the kids will interact with their plants?

SURVEY RESULTS - RAW DATA

- 1. Maya
 - 1. Fruit, Candy, sushi
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. All – corn, string beans
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Fruits, rice, beans, chicken, or pork chops
 - 6. How to plant a seed, food, and plants
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. Brussels sprouts and apples
 - 9. At the window sill so it will get sun
 - 10. Every other day
- 2. Julia
 - 1. Raspberries, apples, bananas
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Corn, tomatoes
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Macaroni, rice, chicken, and soup
 - 6. GMOs
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. On my window sill
 - 10. Every other day
- 3. Jacqueline
 - 1. Rice
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Chinese vegetables
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Rice, meat, fruit, and vegetables
 - 6. GMOs

- 7. No
- 8. n/a
- 9. Window Sill
- 10. Everyday
- 4. Daniel
 - 1. Pizza
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Garlic, broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, potatoes
 - 4. 3 to 6 times a week
 - 5. Chicken, potatoes, vegetables, ginger ale
 - 6. Big mac – processed foods
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. Sage
 - 9. Table
 - 10. Every other day
- 5. Victoria
 - 1. Rice, fruit, vegetable, salad, cheese
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Carrots, lettuce, radish
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Chicken, rice, salad, sandwiches, olives, fish
 - 6. About basil plants
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Everyday
- 6. Aleksandra
 - 1. Pierogi
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Carrots and celery
 - 4. 1 to 3 times week
 - 5. Pierogi
 - 6. GMOs
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. Basil
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Every other day
- 7. Lukasz
 - 1. Pizza, French fries
 - 2. No
 - 3. n/a
 - 4. 1 to 3 a week
 - 5. Chicken cutlets
 - 6. Processed foods – big mac
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a

- 9. On a window sill
- 10. Every other day
- 8. Oscar
 - 1. Pizza
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Carrots
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Carrots, chicken, potatoes, and rice
 - 6. Yes (?)
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. Basil
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Every other day
- 9. Angel
 - 1. Fresh fruit
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Carrots, celery
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. What my mom makes
 - 6. Watering plants
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. Basil, kale
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Every other day
- 10. Jonathan
 - 1. Pasta
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Broccoli
 - 4. 1 to 3 times a week
 - 5. Macaroni and cheese
 - 6. GMOs – DNA of food
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Everyday
- 11. Helena
 - 1. Shrimp, duck, meat, apples, wild rice, tomato soup, potato, bread
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Spinach, beans
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Shrimp, rice, duck, soup, potato, other meat, spinach
 - 6. Plants and basil
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Every other day

- 12. No Name (#1)
 - 1. Sushi
 - 2. Some
 - 3. Broccoli, tomato
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Rice, chicken, broccoli, soy sauce
 - 6. What can be in food
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. Window sill
 - 10. Every other day
- 13. Thomas
 - 1. Cookies
 - 2. No
 - 3. n/a
 - 4. 1 to 3 times a week
 - 5. Cutlets
 - Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 14. Maya #2
 - 1. Meat, fruit, vegetables
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Almost everything
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Meat with a side dish or soup
 - Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 15. Josefa
 - 1. Chicken, potatoes
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Tomatoes, lettuce
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Chicken, rice, salad
 - Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 16. Lashai
 - 1. Tacos, Spanish food
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Corn, string beans, lettuce
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. No answer
 - Did not fill our post workshop survey
- 17. “I will never tell ☺”
 - 1. Popcorn, French fries, pizza, burgers, rice, tacos, bacon, eggs, chips, cookies
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Everything
 - 4. 1 to 3 times a week
 - 5. Chicken (baked or fried), yellow rice, corn

- Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 18. Corina
 - 1. Macaroni and cheese
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Broccoli, celery, lettuce
 - 4. Everyday
 - 5. Rice, vegetables, and some meat
 - Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 19. No name (#2)
 - 1. Pizza
 - 2. Yes
 - 3. Carrots, broccoli
 - 4. 3 to 6 times a week
 - 5. Soup, meat, potatoes, vegetables
 - Did not fill out a post workshop survey
- 20. Dominique (outlier – mentally disabled child)
 - 1. Pizza
 - 2. No answer
 - 3. No answer
 - 4. No answer
 - 5. Chicken
 - 6. Big macs
 - 7. Yes
 - 8. No answer
 - 9. No answer
 - 10. No answer
- 21. Peter (outlier – gave him the wrong survey in the beginning, which affected his responses)
 - 1. Cake
 - 2. No
 - 3. N/a
 - 4. Never
 - 5. Candy
 - 6. Nothing
 - 7. No
 - 8. n/a
 - 9. Near a window
 - 10. Everyday

FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Staff Member #1

- 1 A couple of strength was when the kids were highly involved in the lesson and also when you explained what fast foods really contain. This was excellent.
- 2 There is nothing to improve on. I really enjoyed this activity.

- 3 The child interaction was a great way to teach. Hands-on learning. No complaints.
- 4 I feel that the kids are really going to try to grow their plants. They seemed rally excited when they received them.

Staff Member #2

- 1 Interesting Facts
- 2 Be a little more enthusiastic.
- 3 No answer
- 4 I think they will do well.

Staff Member #3

- 1 I thought it was a great presentation.
- 2 Speaking a little louder
- 3 Your teaching style was great as well
- 4 I think the kids will really take care of their plants.

DATA GATHERED FROM SURVEYS

- Total number of kids who filled out the surveys: 21
- Number of surveys used: 19
- Number of children who completed the post workshop survey (out of surveys used): 12
- There were two outliers, which we excluded from mentioning in our report in other sections. The first outlier could not answer the majority of the questions because he is mentally disabled. The other of whom we accidentally gave the wrong survey before the workshop, which affected his answers. We gave him the post workshop survey instead of the pre workshop survey, and this resulted in him giving humorous rather than true answers to the questions.

2. Do you like vegetables?

- Yes: IIIII IIIII IIIII I 🗲 16
- No: II 🗲 2
- Some: I 🗲 1
- Not counted: II 🗲 2 (outliers)

3. If so, which ones do you like?

- Broccoli IIIII 🗲 5
- Lettuce IIIII - 5
- Carrots IIIII 🗲 5
- Tomatoes III 🗲 3
- Celery III 🗲 3
- Corn III 🗲 3
- None III 🗲 3 (1 outlier)
- Almost everything/everything II 🗲 2
- String Beans II 🗲 2
- Garlic I 🗲 1
- Cabbage I 🗲 1

- Potatoes I 🗲 1
- Radish I 🗲 1
- Spinach I 🗲 1
- "Chinese vegetables" I 🗲 1
- No answer I 🗲 1 (outlier)

4. How often do you eat fresh fruit or vegetables?

- Everyday IIIII IIIII I 🗲 11
- 3 to 6 times a week II 🗲 2
- 1 to 3 times per week IIIII 🗲 5
- Never I 🗲 1 (outlier)
- No answer I 🗲 1 (outlier)

5. Describe what you usually eat for dinner in your household.

We found that most children (15 out of 19) ate home cooked meals that consisted of meat, grains (potatoes or rice), and a side dish of vegetables.

6. What did you learn?

- About plants IIII 🗲 4
- GMOs IIII 🗲 4
- Processed foods (Big Mac) III 🗲 3
- Nothing I 🗲 1
- Not included IIIII IIIII 🗲 9
 - Either did not fill out a survey or an outlier

7. Did you discover any new fruits or vegetables?

- Yes: IIIII 🗲 5
- No: IIIII II 🗲 7
- No answer: IIIII II 🗲 7
- Not included (outlier): II 🗲 2

8. If so, which ones?

- Basil III 🗲 3
- Brussels sprouts I 🗲 1
- Apples I 🗲 1
- Sage I 🗲 1
- Kale I 🗲 1

9. Where are you going to put your plant when you get home?

- Correct answer (window sill): IIIII IIIII I 🗲 11
- Incorrect answer: I 🗲 1
- No answer/not included: IIIII IIII 🗲 9
 - Either did not fill out a survey or an outlier

10. How often should you water your plant?

- Correct answer - Every other day: IIIII IIII 🗲 9

- Everyday: IIII ☞ 4
- No answer: IIIII III ☞ 8
 - Either did not fill out a survey or an outlier

IV. BUDGET AND RESOURCES USED

- Grant provided by Wallerstein Collaborative: \$100
- Resources needed for the Workshop (including prices and where items were acquired):
 - 10 lbs. of Compost – Provided by the Lower East Side Ecology Center
 - Organic, seasonal and local fruits, vegetables and herbs (from the Union Square Green Market) – \$50
 - Fruits: Pears, apples, oranges
 - Vegetables: Brussels sprouts, cabbage, lettuce, chard, kale, bok choy, garlic, onions, broccoli, mushrooms, sweet potatoes, potatoes, beets, carrots
 - Herbs: Basil, Sage, Rosemary
 - 25 Color Printed Double Sided Handouts (from NYU Bobst Printing Lab) – \$37.50 (\$.75 per side)
 - 100 Organic Basil Seeds (from Sustainable NYC) – \$4
 - Organic Potted Basil Plant (from Whole Foods) – \$4
 - 30 Styrofoam Cups (for planting the seeds) – \$3

V. COVER LETTER

(THE EMAIL SENT OUT TO EDUCATIONAL, YOUTH, FOOD ORGANIZATIONS)

Subject: Educational Nutrition Workshop Opportunity

To whom it may concern:

We are three NYU students interested in motivating children to develop sustainable eating habits. As part of our Environmental Communication course, we have developed a hands-on workshop that includes a curriculum and informational resources (located on our [website](#)) for children between the ages of 7-10 that teaches nutritional values, vegetable identification, and sustainable agriculture. Similar to the development of language skills, we believe that dietary preference is learned at an early age, and exposing children to the benefits of sustainable eating will increase the chances of them carrying these values into adulthood.

Through a grant from Wallerstein Collaborative and the Environmental Conservation Education department at NYU Steinhardt, we were able to pilot our workshop curriculum at the YMCA in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Based on the positive feedback that we observed and received from parents, students, and staff, we feel that this 45-minute workshop is a very feasible and effective way of teaching children about food justice. By the end of this

workshop, children should be able to identify vegetables based on when they are in season, recognize the health effects of eating processed foods, and be able to grow and care for a low-maintenance herb plant. Along the way, students will learn the basics of the way the food industry operates and what it means to eat processed foods versus local and organic foods.

If you share the belief that children should eat healthily, and would like to get involved, then please feel free to contact us at cm2416@nyu.edu. For more information and to download a free version of our curriculum, visit our website <http://foodjusticeleague.wordpress.com>.

Sincerely,

Chelsey, Jessica, and Jiro

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