



Fact or Foe: Consumer Perceptions

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- D. Character
- D2. Accurately assess my values

National Standards

- CS.01.01.04.b. Use appropriate and reliable resources to complete an action or project.
- CS.01.04.02.c. assess personal values.
- ABS.06.01.02.b. ASSESS the presence of marketing infrastructure for agricultural commodities.
- AS.03.02.01.a. Explain the importance of biosecurity to the animal industry.
- FPP.01.02.02.a. Explain the importance and usage of industry standards in food products and processing.
- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NS.5-8.3 – Life Science
- NS.5-8.6 – Science in Personal and Social Perspectives
- NSS-EC.5-8.7 – Markets and Market Prices
- NSS-EC.5-8.8 – Supply and Demand
- NT.K-12.5 – Technology Research Tools
- NT.K-12.6 – Technology Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Tools

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the student will...
- Recognize how food product pathways affect consumers.
- As a result of this **lesson** the student will...
- Explain the importance of public perception and its correlation to consumer concerns for food safety and producer marketing concerns.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 55 minutes.

Resources

National FFA Organization. (2003). LifeKnowledge Precepts and Signs of Success. — United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. (2009). Animal Disease Traceability. Retrieved April 7, 2010 from <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/traceability/> — United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. (2009). Country of Origin Labeling. Retrieved July 27, 2009 from <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/cool> — Verifying the Validity of Websites. (n.d.). Searching for Reliable Resources. Retrieved July 27, 2009 from <http://imet.csus.edu/imet5/koreen/284/index.htm>

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- Writing surface
- Pens/pencils – one per student
- Overhead projector/transparencies
- MS.FS.1.4.TM.A – one per teacher
- MS.FS.1.4.AS.A – one per student
- MS.FS.1.4.ASSESS.A – one per student

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Perception

Consumer

Reliable Resource

Animal Disease Traceability

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)

Content Outline

Objective 1. Explain importance of public perception in terms of the correlation between ***consumer*** concerns for food safety and producer marketing concerns.

- I. ***Perception: the way an individual views, comprehends, and thinks about information to form an opinion.***
 - A. People form ***perceptions*** based on information provided by many sources, some of which provide accurate information, and others that are not always honest and accurate.



Lesson Number: MS.FS.1.4

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Fact or Foe: Consumer Perceptions

1. Newspaper, radio, television news reports and talk shows, magazines, Internet are all sources of information.
 2. Media: one of the most common ways information is transferred to the public, often through the form of news.
 3. Public **perceptions** of food safety drive agricultural food product production.
- B. Product preferences of **consumers** are based upon positive or negative experiences with products, or based upon information received from the news or other resource.
1. **Consumer:** a person who buys or uses a good or service.
 2. **Consumers** make their decisions to purchase a product based on news reports, advertisements, food package labels, how safe they feel using the product, and the opinions of other **consumers**.
 3. **Consumers** drive the production and sale or distribution of agricultural food products.
 4. If a product is popular and sales are high, the producer will produce more of that product.
 5. If sales are low, the producer will produce less or stop producing the product all together.
- C. Producers promote food safety through systems like: Animal Disease Traceability and **Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)**.
1. Food Safety: the process of assuring that food will promote good health.
 2. **Animal Disease Traceability:** livestock tracking system to protect the health of livestock and track/prevent diseases.
 3. **COOL:** a way for retailers to notify **consumers** of the location in which their food originated.
 4. **Consumers** should be aware of these practices to understand the precautions agriculturalists take to keep food safe.
- D. **Reliable Resources:** sources of information that meet the criteria of being accurate, trustworthy, and reputable.
1. Resources are reliable when: the information is accurate, the author is reputable, references are included indicating where the information came from, the information is based on facts rather than opinions, and the information is current.

Interest Approach

Ask the class the following questions. Pause between each question to allow students to raise their hands:

Raise your hand if you eat school lunch.

Allow students to respond.

Raise your hand if you don't eat school lunch.

Allow students to respond.

Great. Let's hear some of your thoughts on school lunch for those of you who eat it.

Ask the students the following questions and give them time to share and discuss.

What do you like about it? Allow students to respond. What do you dislike about it? Allow students to respond.

Those of you who don't eat school lunch, let's hear your thoughts. What do you dislike about it?

Call on several students to share their responses. Possible responses for not eating it: the meat is "mystery meat," it's not fresh, the food is poor quality, there are bugs in the food, etc.

Great. Thank you for sharing this information with us. Those of you who eat school lunch, have you ever heard bad things about it from your friends?

Allow students to respond.

What have you heard?

Allow students to respond.

Those of you who don't eat school lunch, where did you get your information about the school lunch?

Possible response: friends.

So where did those people get their information?

Possible response: I don't know, their friends, etc.



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How do you know if what they are telling you is true?

Possible response: we don't know if it's true.

What we just learned is that we decided we don't like cafeteria food either because we think it is disgusting or because of something our friends told us, and we don't really know if the information our friends gave us is true. Right? Well the same thing is true for many things in life.

Today, we are going to learn about public **perceptions** of food and how what we think as **consumers** influences the production of agricultural food products. Let's get into teacher mode by being good listeners and paying attention as we prepare to learn about public **perceptions**.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Explain importance of public perception in terms of the correlation between **consumer** concerns for food safety and producer marketing concerns.

Use the *Little Professor e-Moment®* to teach the content for this lesson. With partners, students will take turns listening to your instruction, taking notes, and then teaching their partners. Students will alternate with this process until all content has been covered. Once the content has been covered, the partners will develop a skit to perform for the class. The skit will demonstrate a piece of information they learned in class today. For example, skits can demonstrate an informed **consumer** sharing information with an uninformed **consumer**, or friends teaching each other how to find information using **reliable resources**.

In a moment, we are going to practice being Professors at your favorite universities. To do this, we will be working in teams of two for this activity. You will have 30 seconds to find a partner. Do that now!

Pause for 30 seconds.

Once students have found a partner and have paper on their desks, proceed with further instructions.

Great job finding partners! Now, we are going to learn more about public **perceptions** of **consumers** for food safety and the concerns that producers may have as well.

Distribute **MS.FS.1.4.AS.A.**

I am going to share with you some key information today. Each team is going to have a Professor 1 and a Professor 2. When I say GO, you will quickly decide who is going to be 1 or 2 by identifying the teammate whose birthday comes first in the calendar year. For example, if Joe and Sally are in a team and Sally's birthday is before Joe's, then Sally will be Professor 1 and Joe will be Professor 2. The Professor 1 will start by being a tuned-in listener and taking notes, while Professor 2 is quietly paying attention and not taking notes.

Professor 1 will then have one minute to teach Professor 2 the information. When time is up, you will switch roles and it will be Professor 2's turn to tune in and take notes and teach Professor 1 the information. You have 10 seconds to decide who will be Professor 1 and Professor 2. What questions are there? GO!

To refocus student attention after 10 seconds, snap your fingers until the students join in with you. When they have joined in and settled down, proceed with instruction.

Excellent work! Professors 1's, raise your hand.

Allow students to respond.

Professors 2's, raise your hand.

Allow students to respond.

One last thing. We are going to use the handout titled Guided Notes for taking notes. So, for example, while Professor 1 is taking notes, Professor 2 will sit or read something silently. Then Professor 1 will teach Professor 2 the content from the handout and Professor 2 will take notes. We will repeat this 4 times. What questions are there?

Allow students to respond.

Great, let's begin. All Professor 1's get ready to take notes, and Professor 2's need to turn the outlines over.

Allow time for students to flip paper over.



Fact or Foe: Consumer Perceptions

Chunk 1 for Professor 1 to teach:

At the beginning of class we discussed the process of getting information from our friends. We agreed that we don't always know where our friends got their information, so we don't really know how accurate it is. Remember how a few of us said we don't eat school lunch because it's disgusting or we don't trust it? Well that decision not to eat school lunch is based on the way we perceive the food in our school cafeteria.

A **perception** is the way we view, comprehend, and think about information to form an opinion. As the general public, we form **perceptions** about things every day based on information from a variety of sources, like the newspaper, Internet, radio, television, or magazines. Often, the media is responsible for producing news reports and articles.

Our **perceptions** help us decide what to buy when we go grocery shopping, and the information we receive can influence those decisions. What questions are there so far?

Allow students to respond.

Great. Professor 1's, when I say TEACH you will have one minute to teach this information to Professor 2's. When I say PAUSE, time is up and your attention should be directed toward the front of the room. What questions are there? TEACH!

Give students a 30-second warning before time is up.
PAUSE!

Great job! Professor 2's, remember to take notes.

Chunk 2 to teach to Professor 2's:

How many of us have ever bought something? Great, that makes us all **consumers** because **consumers** are people who buy or use goods and services. As **consumers**, one way we form **perceptions** aside from information sources is through positive or negative experiences with the products.

Consumers drive the production and sale of agricultural food products. So, the same way we as **consumers** expect to purchase food that is safe, producers work very hard to distribute safe food products so that you will trust their products and form positive **perceptions**.

If a product is popular and sales are high, the producer will continue to produce that product. But if sales are low because **consumers** aren't buying the product, production slows down, and sometimes production stops all together. So, what questions do we have about **consumers** and product production?

Allow students to respond. Super!

Professor 2's, when I say TEACH you will have one minute to teach this information to Professor 1's. When I say PAUSE, time is up and your attention should be directed toward the front of the room. What questions are there? TEACH!

Give students a 30-second warning before time is up.
PAUSE!

Great job! Back to Professor 1's.

Chunk 3 to teach to Professor 1's:

Now, we said just a moment ago that producers are very concerned with the way we as **consumers** perceive food safety. Food safety is the process of assuring that food will promote good health.

Producers work very hard to make sure our food is truly as safe as it can be. **Consumers** may not always be aware of the measures that agriculturalists take to keep our food safe. Programs like **Animal Disease Traceability** and **Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)** are two examples of ways producers keep our food safe.

Animal Disease Traceability keeps track of livestock to protect their health and track/prevent diseases. **COOL** is a way for retailers to notify **consumers** of the location in which their food originated, so **consumers** will know exactly where their food came from. Remember that food in the school cafeteria? It, too, is protected by these programs. What questions do you have about food safety concerns?

Allow students to respond.

Awesome. Professor 1's, with only one minute, time to TEACH!

Give students a 30-second warning before time is up.
PAUSE!



Fact or Foe: Consumer Perceptions

You guys are doing an awesome job as Professors today! Keep it up!

Chunk 4 to teach Professor 2's:

So we've been talking about forming **perceptions** and sources of information. Well, how do we know if all that stuff is even reliable? **Reliable resources** are sources of information that meet the criteria of being accurate, trustworthy, and reputable. That means that the information is based on facts rather than opinions, references are included so you can trace back where the specific details came from, the information is current and up-to-date, and the author is reputable which means that he/she is well known and is respectable.

Since the information we read and hear often impacts our decisions, why do you think it's important to pay attention to resources and determine if they are reliable?

Possible responses: to get the truth, bad to make decisions based on opinions of others, etc.

Great! So, let's think for a moment about our own **perceptions** of people or things. When we form opinions of people based on their taste in music or whether they have the latest fashion fads, is that forming an opinion based on reliable information?

Answer: No.

Correct. The same way producers have strong values and take great pride in making it possible for people to have access to a healthy, nutritious food supply, we should do the same and think about what's important and meaningful in life by making decisions and forming values based on facts and reliable information. What questions do you have about **reliable resources**?

Allow students to respond.

Great. Professor 2's, it is time for you to TEACH!

Give students a 30-second warning before time is up. PAUSE!

Super! Now it's time to put your acting skills to the test.

As Professors, you are experts at your universities about **consumer** concerns for food safety, **reliable resources**, and public **perceptions**. When I say ACTION, in our teams, we are going to create a short two- to three-minute skit where one actor will be the expert professor and the other actor will be a professor from another field who is completely unfamiliar with agriculture.

In your teams, you now have four chunks of notes based on all the information from class today. Use that information to develop your scripts by picking one chunk to focus on for the skit. Remember to be creative!

We will have 15 minutes to prepare our skits. Be ready to perform with a handwritten copy of the script when I say CUT. What questions do you have about this activity? ACTION!

Feel free to adjust time allotted to prepare the skits based on class time left after reviewing the content. You can allow more or less than 15 minutes depending on the class. You can also make the length of the skit shorter if you have a larger class and are short on time. The assessment for this activity will be a handwritten copy of the script for the skit. Each team should turn in a script.

Review/Summary

How do we form **perceptions**?

Possible responses: through information we read or hear, like news reports, newspaper, television, radio, Internet.

Right, so what exactly is a **perception**?

Answer: the way we view, comprehend, and think about information to form an opinion.

Excellent! Who are **consumers** and why are they important?

Possible responses: **Consumers** buy things, or use goods and services, important because they determine if a product will continue to be sold or no longer produced, they drive production of products, etc.

Great. Since we know that producers are also concerned about how their products are marked, what do they do to make sure food is safe?

Answer: programs like **Animal Disease Traceability** and **COOL**.



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Right, and who can explain what a **reliable resource** is?

Possible responses: **reliable resources** are accurate, trustworthy, and reputable; they have reference lists; authors are well known; information is based on facts and not opinions; and they are current.

Correct! Why are **reliable resources** important for the **consumer** when it comes to agricultural food products?

Possible responses: since we form **perceptions** based on information we read or hear, that information should come from a **reliable resource** if we are going to make informed decisions, to be good **consumers** we need true information to make a good decision, etc.

Application

Extended classroom Activity:

Food Survey: As a class, develop a poll or survey with questions about **consumer perceptions** of food safety and agricultural food products, based on the information learned during this lesson. Determine the number of questions for the survey and have students write the questions based on agricultural topics they feel are important and relevant to this task. The survey can be given to another class, distributed during a lunch period, or school wide. Teachers should also be included in the survey population. When you receive the completed surveys, analyze the results to determine how the school community perceives food safety and agricultural food products. Also, compare the **perceptions** of teachers to the **perceptions** of the students.

FFA Activity:

Create a prepared speech to inform the audience about the importance of **reliable resources** and forming **perceptions** based on the influence of **consumer perceptions** on agricultural food products. Speeches can be three to five minutes in length (or shorter if you have a large class), and students can present their speeches in class and/or at the FFA chapter meeting.

SAE Activity:

Reliable Resource Reference List: Using the Internet, newspaper, books, or other resources you have access to, students will create a class **reliable resource** reference list to be used as a research database. Assign students various food safety issues/topics to research. As they are researching the topics, they should use their skills of identifying **reliable resources** to identify references that can be used in the future for research. Each student should try to find a contribution of at least five **reliable resources**.

Evaluation

MS.FS.1.4.ASSESS.A

Answers to Evaluation

1. A
2. Any of the following are correct: reference list, information based on facts, information not based on opinions, information is up to date, author is reputable.
3. B
4. Any of the following are correct: television news reports, media, newspapers, radio, articles, Internet
5. D



I. Perception: the way an individual views, comprehends, and thinks about information to form an opinion.

- A. People form perceptions based on information provided by many sources, some of which provide accurate information, and others that are not always honest and accurate.
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Guided Notes

Name _____

Chunk 1

1. A _____ is the way we view, comprehend, and think about information to _____.

2. Sources of information:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3. Perceptions influence _____.

.....

Chunk 2

1. _____ are people who buy or use _____ or _____.

2. Consumers _____ the production and _____ of agricultural food products.

3. If sales are high, _____ is also high.

4. If sales are _____, production is also low.

.....

Chunk 3

1. _____ is the process of assuring that food will promote good health.

2. Animal Disease Traceability is _____.

3. COOL stands for _____.

4. _____ is a way for retailers to notify consumers of the location in which their food originated.

.....

Chunk 4

1. Reliable resources are _____, _____, and _____.

2. Information is based on _____ rather than opinions, and the information is _____.

3. Reliable resources always include _____.



Name _____

Directions: Read each statement and decide which response is appropriate by circling the correct letter that corresponds with the selected response, or by writing the response in the space provided.

1. Consumers buy and use goods and services.

- A. True
- B. False

2. List two ways to identify reliable resources as explained in this lesson.

- A. _____
- B. _____

3. Consumer perceptions do not influence agricultural food product production.

- A. True
- B. False

4. List two ways consumers form their perceptions of agricultural food products.

- A. _____
- B. _____

5. Agriculturalists endure food safety through programs like _____.

- A. COOL
- B. FDA
- C. Animal Disease Traceability
- D. Both A and C
- E. All of the above