Food miles spreadsheet

Summary	Children can use the spreadsheet to model the food miles they would accumulate for a meal. Options allow them to change the contents and look at the effects on the total food miles.
Activities	Modelling using the food miles spreadsheet. Discuss the effects of choosing locally-produced food on the total food miles travelled. Include a discussion on how ingredients for pre-processed foods may come great distances.
Teacher info	Much of our food is transported from around the world. Processed food may show the country where it was produced and packaged. However, the ingredients may have come form a range of locations. The spreadsheet gives values of food miles for a range of different foods. These values are estimates and meant purely to illustrate the types of distances that foods or ingredients can travel.
Timing	20 minutes in class
Resources	Food miles Excel spreadsheet. Question sheets below.
Curriculum links	ICT – using simulations and exploring models.
Differentiation	Children can research the sources of ingredients and foods in their lunch box / school lunch and construct a spreadsheet to calculate the total food miles they have travelled.

Food miles

Our food can come from all over the world. The total distance the food or its ingredients have travelled are called food miles.

Food miles helps us to see how much carbon dioxide has been produced by transporting the food. More food miles means more carbon dioxide.

Using the spreadsheet

1. Open the spreadsheet on your computer.
2. Choose the foods from the available options.

Click in the white box and choose from the drop-down list

The food miles show automatically

Choose your drink		Orange juice		3,200
Choose your main course	1	Shepherd pie (home made)		11,000
	2	Chips from local potatoes		30
	3	Sprouts		35
Choose your dessert		Banana		3,700

Questions

1. What are the total food miles for a meal you would like to eat?

2. What changes could you make to your meal to reduce the food miles? Explain why these changes would reduce the food miles.

3. Explain how the food you choose can help to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and global warming.