

SUPPORT FARMERS AND GROWERS

# Buying local produce



*Whenever possible we should support markets, grocers, stores and stalls that source local produce.*

Farming regions around Australia grow produce depending on the suitability of the climate, landscape, water availability and soil types. Some plants grow well in certain areas and others don't. That is why Australia has many different food growing regions that grow the variety of produce we need.

While it is important to buy produce that is grown in Australia (and from your state), there are huge advantages to buying food from your local region. This supports local businesses and helps make our farming communities more sustainable. If we spend money locally then that money cycles through other local business creating employment and wealth within the local economy.

## Local is better because:

- Locally grown food tastes better
- Local food is better for you
- Local food supports local families
- Local food protects the farmland
- Local food keeps taxes down
- Local food benefits the environment and our native plants and wildlife
- Local food boosts our well-being
- Local food is an investment in our future



How far does your food travel?

In this activity you will learn that the produce grown on farms often takes time and travels large distances before it gets to us, the customer. Go on the food journey to find out the many steps food can take and why it is important to buy local produce direct from the farmer.

**STEP 1** Have a look at the labels and stickers on the fruit, vegetables and meat in your fridge and pantry (or lunchbox). See if you can identify where this food came from (country, state, region/town) and create your own version of the following table.

Food	Banana	...
Country	Australia	
State	NSW	
Town or Region	Coffs Harbour	

**STEP 2** Read through and complete 'The Food Journey' activity. To understand the many steps along the journey refer to the terms in the box ►

Calculate how far Jenny's grapes have travelled to get from the grower to her lunchbox.

**Growers** are the farmers who grow the raw produce for the food.

**Processors** take the raw produce and convert it into the form that the product requires.

**Wholesaler/ Wholesale** markets often buy food in bulk. They then on-sell it to retail grocers.

The **transport** industry is involved in many steps along the way. They transport the food from growers to processors to packagers. Transport can occur in many ways: trucks, ships, planes and train.

**Packagers** take the product and package and grade them into retail form.

**Warehouse operators/distribution centres** store the food for future use and organise it into orders for clients.

**Retail grocers** are responsible for displaying, marketing and selling the food.

**Customer** buys and consumes the finished product.

# THE FOOD JOURNEY

Read this story about the journey of a bunch of grapes from the farm to the customer and then answer the questions on the following page.

## The Jolly Grape Vineyard

Jenny is from Maitland in the Hunter Valley NSW. She walks into her local supermarket to buy a bunch of grapes and notices on the bag that they come from “The Jolly Grape Vineyard”. She smiles to herself as she knows this farm is located only 10 km from her house. She’s buying local produce!

While it is preferred to make sure we buy local produce we sometimes do not realise how far it has travelled and how many hands it has passed through along the way. Help Jenny piece together her grapes' journey to see if it is as simple as going from the farm to the supermarket.



**The Jolly Grape Vineyard** is located 10 km outside Maitland. The apples are picked each morning and put into fruit bins. The fruit is driven 5 km from the vineyard to the local **wholesaler's farm shed** where it waits to be picked up.

The wholesaler buys grapes from all over the Maitland area. A truck picks up the grapes and they are driven 160 km to his **processing shed** in Sydney. The grapes are washed, graded and bagged for sale at the market. They are delivered 10 km down the road to the **wholesale fruit and vegetable market**.

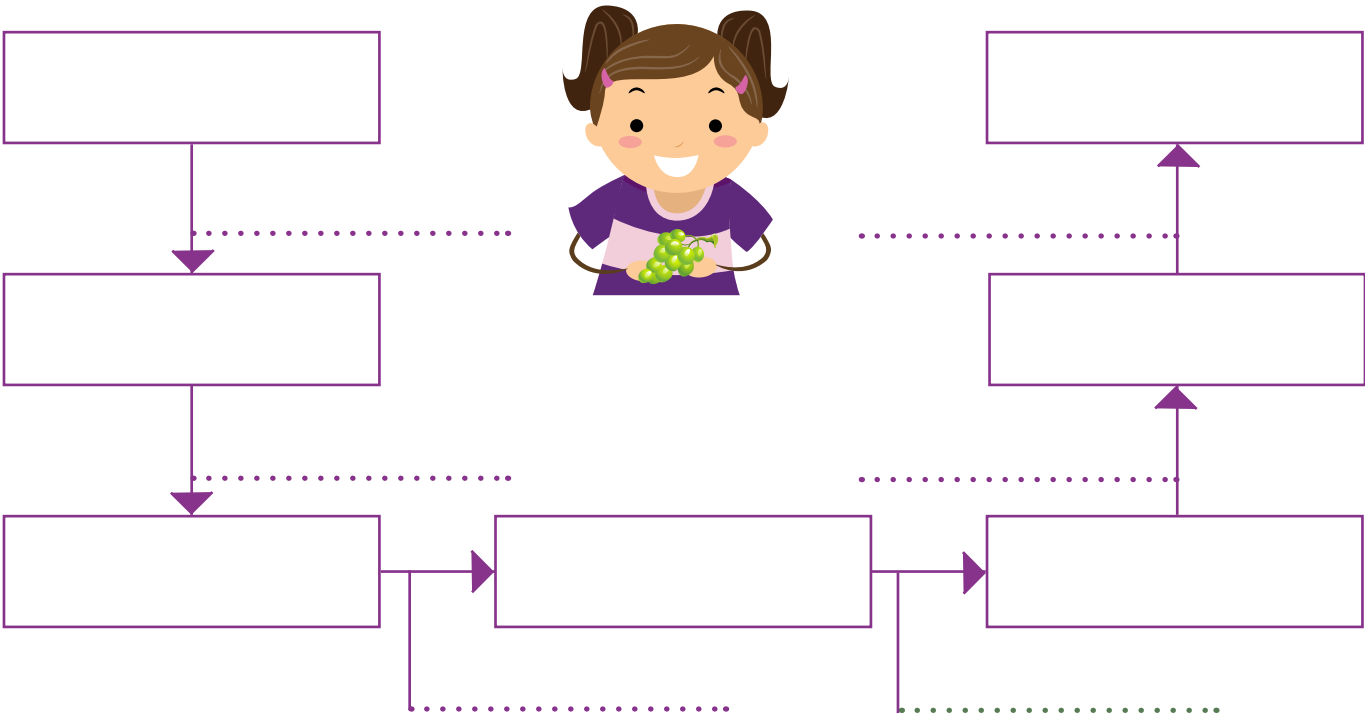
A supermarket representative is at the wholesale markets. Boxes of bagged grapes are sold to the supermarket and shipped 40 km from the wholesale fruit and vegetable market to the **supermarket distribution centre**.

The grapes are stored at the distribution centre until needed. They are organised into orders and sent out to all the retail stores.

Jenny's grapes are then transported 160 km back to the Maitland **retail supermarket store**. Eventually the grapes are taken out and put on display. **Jenny** buys the grapes from her local supermarket and takes it home, 5 km away.

# HOW FAR HAVE JENNY’S GRAPES TRAVELLED?

1. There are multiple steps highlighted in the story as the grapes travel from the farmer to Jenny, the customer. Write these steps in order on the diagram. Include the transport distances on the dotted lines.



2. How many different times have the grapes been transported around the countryside?  
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3. Using the distances in the story, calculate the total distance that the grapes have travelled to get to Jenny. Show your calculations.

4. How far would the grapes travel if Jenny bought it straight from the farmer and took it home?  
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5. If Jenny bought the grapes direct from the farmer, would it be fresher than buying it from the supermarket? Explain your answer.

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Answer: .....